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MY QUEEN

MARION MARLOWE IN WASHINGTON
OR MEETING THE PRESIDENT
BY GRACE SHIRLEY

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Here Is Health

53 Leading St., Cleveland, O.,
Oct. 7, 1900.

Dr. T. A. SLOCUM.

Dear Sir:—I am pleased to inform you that your Remedies have completely cured me. I was troubled with weak lungs and chest, and also had catarrh. I *know* the Slocum System is the best in the world, and I will recommend your medicine to all who may be in need of Remedies of their character.

Yours truly,
HARRY L. LYON.

McComb, Pike Co., Miss.,
Oct. 2, 1900.

Dr. T. A. SLOCUM,

Dear Sir:—I write to let you know that your Remedies have entirely cured my little girl of scrofula and I feel very thankful to you for all your kindness.

Yours respectfully,
MALISIA ADISON.

Wesson, Copiah Co., Miss.,
Oct. 4, 1900.

DR. T. A. SLOCUM,

Dear Sir:—In reply to your kind letter I wish to say that since taking your Remedies I am sound as a dollar. I believe had it not been for your medicine I would now be in my grave. I feel very thankful to you for the cure that was performed in my case, and beg to remain,

Yours sincerely,
CHAS. VAN NORDEN.

Woodland, St. Joseph Co.,
Oct. 9, 1900.

Dr. T. A. SLOCUM,

Dear Sir:—My little boy had catarrh in the head very badly. When he was five years old I saw your medicine advertised and tried it and he now is entirely cured. I can highly recommend your medicine to anyone.

Yours respectfully,
MRS. ASA TABER.

Grove Park, Alachua Co., Fla.,
Oct. 19, 1900.

Dr. T. A. SLOCUM,

Dear Sir:—I received your letter, also the Remedies that you sent at my request and hope you will pardon my long delay in writing to you to recommend your good medicine. The pain in my breast has vanished and I am feeling a great deal stronger than before. I shall recommend your Remedies to all in my town who are suffering from consumption or any disorder of the throat, chest and lungs. Thanking you very kindly for what you have done for me, I remain,

Yours respectfully,
M. L. BOOKER

Orion, Orleans Co., N. Y.,
Sept. 8, 1900.

Dr. T. A. SLOCUM,

Dear Sir:—The cough which has troubled me for a long time is now entirely gone, and I owe my restoration to your wonderful Remedies. I am getting stronger every day, for which I feel very thankful to you, and shall recommend your Remedies to everybody.

Yours respectfully,
CHAS. H. DAVELING.

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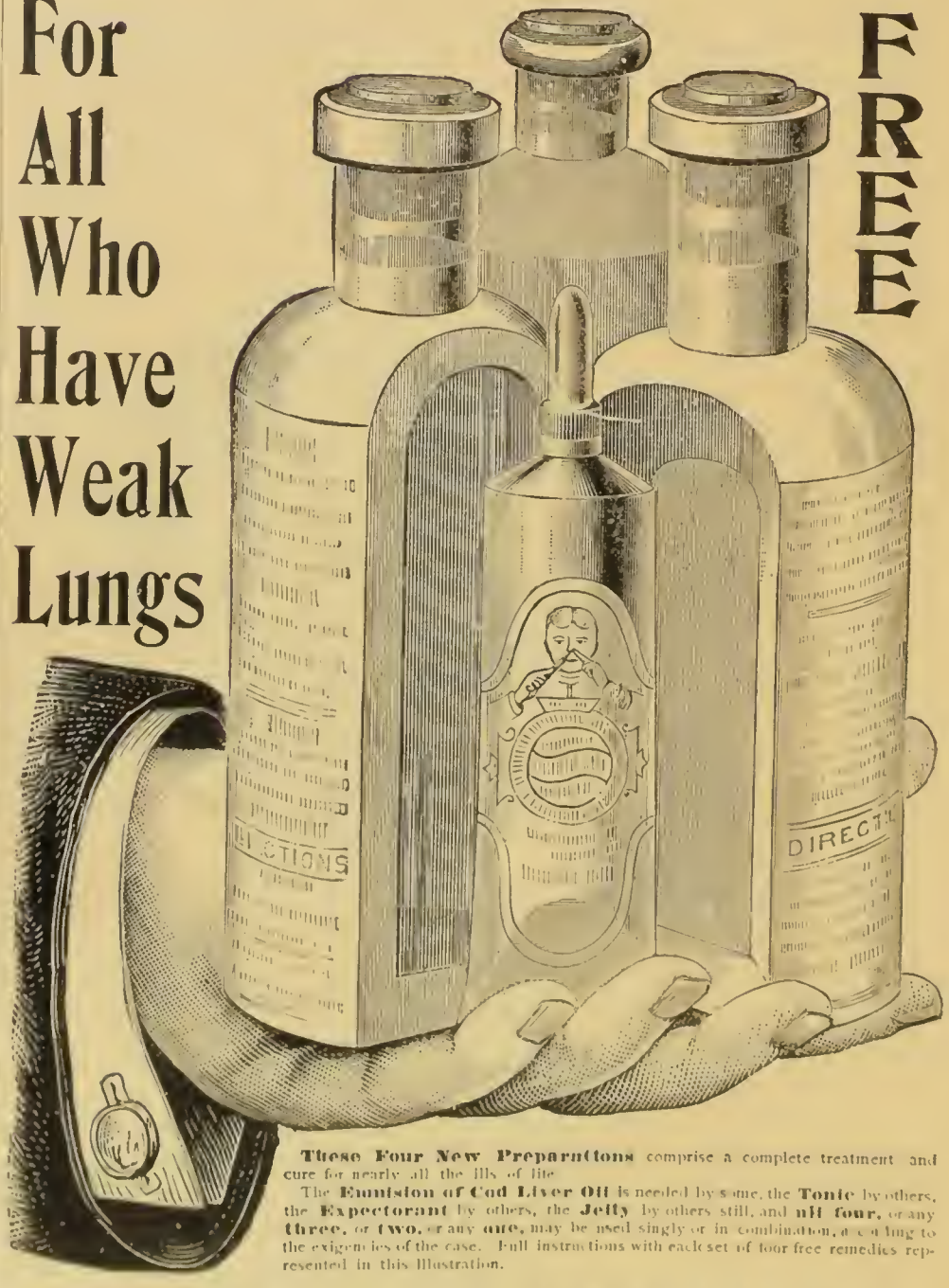
FREE



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MY QUEEN
A WEEKLY JOURNAL FOR YOUNG WOMEN

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MARION MARLOWE IN WASHINGTON;

OR,

MEETING THE PRESIDENT.

By GRACE SHIRLEY.

CHAPTER I.

THE SPECIAL CAR.

"Whoop! Talk about traveling on a comet! What's the matter with this, I'd like to know? A mile a minute isn't in it! There you have truth and poetry combined! Isn't it glorious to be whizzing through space at this gait, Marion?"

"It certainly is, Bert. Oh, your father was just lovely to send us his car! What a pity that Mrs. Burnside and Ida Inza and the children couldn't have come with us!"

The two speakers were standing on the rear platform of an observation car, which had been built for the special use of a railroad president, and they will be recognized at once as Marion Marlowe, the beautiful star of the Temple Theatrical Company, and her old friend, Bert Jackson, the comedian of the company.

They had just finished an engagement in Topeka, Kansas, and Bert's foster-father had arranged to have his private car meet them and bring them on to Washington, so that they might be present at the ceremonies upon the fourth of March, and here they were, fairly flying through space, yet as comfortable as though they were housed in a palace.

Before Bert could answer his companion's remark a very stylish young lady joined them on the platform.

"Yes, it is a pity, Marion," she said, as she caught the young girl's last words, "but, in spite of the comfort in which we are traveling, the trip would have been a very hard one for Jackets and little Ruby."

"You bet! And they'd be lost in the shuffle as soon as we reached Washington, Alma," laughed Bert, "so their mothers were wise to keep them where they are. They'd have been two dilapidated kids before we got back to Salt Lake City."

"It couldn't have happened at a better time," said another voice, as Mr. Temple, the manager of the company, joined them. "We will not lose a date, except the Denver one, and that has been arranged for later. We will go there immediately after we leave Salt

Lake City. That was one reason why I urged Mrs. Burnside not to take this trip—she is a delicate woman and there would be too much traveling. I wish my company to remain intact until the end of the season."

"Then we will not lose any money by coming, and I am sure we shall enjoy it," said Marion, as she tried to smooth down the masses of her beautiful chestnut hair that the wind was tossing in every direction.

"As if we cared for a few paltry thousands!" laughed Bert, as he started back into the car to look for his sweetheart, the *ingénue* of the company. "Why, we are all bloated bondholders! Just ask our treasurer!"

"We certainly have had a very successful tour. I shall be sorry when it is over," said Mr. Temple, looking at Marion.

The young girl was as pretty as a picture as she stood clinging to the rail, with her magnificent hair blowing about her face and her great gray eyes shining with enjoyment.

"So shall I, Mr. Temple," said Miss Allyn, quickly, "and yet I ought not to say so, for I am going to be married and, of course, I expect to be very happy. Still, we have been through so much together that I hate to think of parting. You know, Marion and I are exactly like sisters."

She wound her arm around her friend's waist as she spoke, and, just at that moment, the train slowed up at a station and Bert came flying out on the platform with a handful of newspapers.

"Oh, what luck to get a paper!" cried Marion, as she took one. Five minutes later they were all back in the car and busily reading.

"Hello! What's this?" cried Bert, after a minute.

"Here's the name of pop's friend, Colonel Horace Appleby. It says he is engaged to one of the belles of Washington, and hints that a brother officer feels so aggrieved over the affair that it is quite likely there will be a duel or something. There's a family feud at the bottom of it, they say, but they can't speak highly enough of Colonel Appleby."

"Oh, but they can't fight duels in this country," said Marion, quickly; "the law forbids that sort of nonsense."

"Pooh! As if law-makers cared for law! Why, the colonel is a Congressman! The man who knows how to make a law ought certainly to know how to break it. And furthermore, they are both Southerners. Probably they believe in lynching, also!"

"I guess it is just a newspaper story," said Miss Allyn, smilingly. "I've been in the business long enough to swallow all reports like that with a grain of salt; but does it give the name of the fortunate lady?"

"No; merely says she is a belle and a daughter of the South," was Bert's answer, as he ran his eye down the column. "Well, that will surprise pop, for he considered Colonel Appleby a chronic bachelor. He must be fifty, if he is a day, and yet the paper speaks of his paying suit to the lady."

"It's never too late to mend," called out a jolly voice, and Dr. Reginald Brookes, the leading man of the company, came up and took a chair near them.

"You mean there's no fool like an old fool," broke in Miss Ellis, the *ingénue*, who had just waked up from a short nap and smiled at them.

"Oh, Miss Ellis! The idea of your saying anything like that! Why shouldn't a man of fifty get married as well as a boy of eighteen, I'd like to know, and you certainly did not make fun of Bert when he popped the question," cried Miss Allyn.

"Oh, I'm not sure but what I did," replied the *ingénue*, loftily. "I'm sure I told him he was stupid to care for a girl like me, when there were so many rich and beautiful girls floating around the country!"

"And what did he say to that?" asked Dr. Brookes, merrily.

"I said, 'Let 'em float!' What should I say?" remarked Bert, coolly; "but between you and me, she didn't make fun of me a bit. On the contrary, she looked as pleased as anything! Why, I had all I could do to keep her from hugging me!"

He dodged just in time to miss the book that Miss Ellis tossed at his head, and then bolted out on the platform, so as not to hear what followed.

"The wretch! How he does fib!" cried Miss Ellis, blushing. "Why, he wanted me

to kiss him the minute he proposed and, upon my word, I wouldn't do it!"

"Of course you wouldn't! We all know you wouldn't," said Miss Allyn, soothingly; "but, really, I don't see why you didn't. I am sure I should have! When I fell in love I developed a perfect mania for kissing, and just think, I haven't seen my promised husband since we left Indianapolis! Oh, I know how it feels to be a grass widow!"

"It must be awful," laughed Miss Ellis, who had recovered from her embarrassment. "Why, if I was to be separated from Bert a day I believe it would kill me!"

Every one laughed at her tragic tones, and then Marion happened to glance up at Dr. Brookes.

The young man was looking at her with a wistful expression in his eyes, as though he were longing with all his heart to hear her express some such sentiment.

A flush rose to her cheeks, and she turned her eyes away quickly.

The next instant the train began slowing up, and the conductor called out "Washington!"

CHAPTER II.

THE TWO COLONELS.

It was the day of the inauguration of President McKinley, and the wide streets of the national capital were swarming with sight-seers. A gigantic parade stretched down Pennsylvania avenue, and at every street corner were waiting companies ready to fall in at a moment's notice, while the crowds that thronged the sidewalks waved flags and banners, and cheered lustily. The beautiful city was in gala attire, and every one was bent upon making the day a memorable one.

Now and then there would be a "rough-and-tumble" fight upon some crowded corner, but it was usually indulged in by some of the colored population, who had consumed a little too much whisky in honor of the occasion.

Overlooking the seething crowd from the steps of the Treasury Building stood two gentlemen, wearing silk hats and frock coats, and showing plainly by every movement that they were no less important personages than Congressmen or Senators.

Behind them at a little distance stood another gentleman, clad in the uniform of an army officer, but, although he was within speaking distance of the other two, they merely saluted him and resumed their talk about the panorama that passed before them.

Suddenly the younger of the two uttered a sharp exclamation:

"Quick! Look at that group just opposite, colonel! You are a connoisseur of beauty—what is your opinion of the young lady with the chestnut hair, who is leaning on the arm of that distinguished-looking young fellow?"

His companion, whom he had addressed as "colonel," turned instantly and glanced in the direction indicated.

"By Jove! She is magnificent! Looks like a wild rose, doesn't she? What glorious eyes and what a delicious color!" he exclaimed, enthusiastically.

"An improvement on our Washington beauties! eh, colonel?" said the other, with a mischievous side glance. "She's more of a field daisy, though, to my way of thinking. She is graceful and delicate, and yet there is a rugged freshness about her. A stranger, of course, or one of us would know her."

A laugh followed, and then Colonel Appleby spoke again:

"There seems to be quite a party of them, and a hard time they are having of it to make their way through the mob. Now, if I only had the honor of that beautiful girl's acquaintance, I might offer her my carriage."

The remark was made in jest, and his companion answered it laughingly:

"What, and be the target for the envious eyes of every man in Washington, as well as bring down the wrath of the beautiful Miss MacGregor upon your shoulders! That would be sheer recklessness, I assure you, colonel! It would involve you in more duels than one, old man, but, perhaps you haven't seen the morning papers."

He drew a newspaper from his pocket as he spoke, and pointed to a paragraph.

The elder man glanced at it and then smiled good-naturedly.

"What will they say next?" he commented, in an amused voice. "So I have a rival, have I? Well, it is the first I knew of it, but, certainly, Miss MacGregor is worthy of a broken steel, and all men are reckless when it comes to a pretty woman."

He stroked his long mustache reflectively, and glanced across the street to where the young girl, who had attracted him was still standing with her companions.

"My powers are waning, Senator," he went on, after a minute, "so why should I not have a rival or two? Still, an attack of jealousy might help me out. If the fair one who ignores my attentions could once see that glorious girl in my carriage, it might work like a charm, although I admit it would be a heroic measure."

The two gentlemen laughed, for every word had been in jest, but the man behind them had listened eagerly, and his eyes were shining with a curious expression.

They were all descending the steps as Colonel Appleby spoke, and now mingled with the crowd, their heads towering above nearly every one about them.

"As if any woman in Washington would ignore you, colonel," retorted the Senator, over the heads of a dozen newsboys. "Why, you are a born conqueror of women's hearts, old man, and you have the advantage of being a bachelor."

"Can't see where that makes much difference," replied the colonel, as he edged his way through the crowd. "The smiles come as freely to the Benedict as to the bachelor, now-a-days, so it's hard to know which is the more desirable position."

A sudden swerve of the crowd brought a score or more people between them, and, as the two high hats vanished from his sight, Colonel "Bob" Hinckley, the third man in the party, crossed the street in front of the building toward what looked like an opening on the opposite sidewalk.

"Thinks he is deceiving me by his pretense of modesty, curse him!" he muttered, under his breath. "As if I did not know he was trying to win the love of Emelie MacGregor, the only woman in the world that can make my heart beat faster. Well, we shall see, Colonel Horace Appleby! We shall see how you succeed! There are others who may resort to your heroic measures!"

He bit his lips savagely as he made his way across the street.

There were bitter thoughts in his brain, and his Southern blood was boiling furiously.

An old family feud from way down in Virginia, made him hate his brother officer first, and now here was another bitter cause for hatred. His rival had apparently won from him the love of this girl, a Southern beauty, who was spending the season at the capital.

He had tried to conceal his jealousy, but was not sufficiently guarded, and evidently the newspapers had some knowledge of it, and if this was the case every man in Washington would soon know it.

And what would be the result? He would become more unpopular than ever. There would be no end to the jokes that would be cracked at his expense, and no let up to the teasing of his indifferent companions.

It was a desperate situation, but he set his teeth fiercely. It was "war to the knife" in the cause of love. Now, what should be his first move to outwit his rival?

At this point in his reflections he suddenly stopped short.

He had overtaken the beautiful girl with the chestnut hair and glorious eyes, and at that very minute she turned and addressed one of her companions.

CHAPTER III.

SOME SCHEMING.

"Oh, Alma! We must go back! This is perfectly awful," exclaimed the beautiful girl. "Really, I have been squeezed until I have hardly a breath left! Do let us go back to the hotel and wait a little!"

She was smiling as she spoke, and the stylish young woman whom she addressed glanced back over her shoulder as she answered, gayly:

"The worst is over, Marion, and we must see the inauguration! Just think! We have come all the way from Colorado! It would be dreadful if we were to miss it!"

"If I could only find Colonel Appleby," spoke up the handsome youth, who escorted them. "I went to his house, but he wasn't in,

and, of course, it is like looking for a needle in a haystack to hunt for him now. Pop gave me a letter of introduction to him, you know. They were together in the war, and that's the last he ever heard of him."

"It's too bad," began his beautiful companion, when something interrupted her.

"Bob" Hinckley had suddenly stepped forward, and the next instant he was tapping the youth upon the shoulder.

"Pardon me, but I am Colonel Appleby," he said, in the most courteous tone. "You mentioned my name just now. Did you wish to see me?"

The young man turned instantly, with an exclamation of joy.

"You bet I want to see you!" he said, with a grin. "I am Alberte Jackson, and I've got a letter of introduction from my adopted father, Captain Hobart Canfield, President of the O., I. and C. Railroad. He told me to look you up and present his regards, and—well, of course, he expected you'd do the handsome and introduce me to the President."

The colonel laughed at the youth's frank manner, and at the same time he shook hands with the greatest cordiality.

"Delighted, I'm sure," he began, but the young man rattled on. He was anxious to introduce his father's friend to his two companions.

"Pop's told me all about you," he said, with great satisfaction, "but he'll be surprised to hear that you are not as gray as he is, but I say, ain't this a jam? I am almost as flat as a flounder! Nearly everybody in the world must be in Washington to-day, sir!"

"Not quite all," was the reply, but it was uttered a bit vacantly, for the colonel was almost staring at the beautiful "field daisy."

"Oh, I forgot to tell you that my present vocation is that of a fake actor," went on the young man, affably. "I'm playing comedy parts with the Temple Theatrical Company, the greatest combination on earth, and now, if you'll allow me, I'll present you to our star, Miss Marlowe, and to Miss Allyn, our 'leading heavy.'"

This time the colonel's smile was wide-awake and pointed, and he greeted the ladies in a courtly manner, his eyes hardly moving from the beautiful face of the star actress.

"The rest of our company is stranded somewhere in the crowd," continued the young man, "but we won't bother to look for them—they'll take care of themselves, and we'll meet them at the New Willard after the inaugural ceremonies."

Colonel Hinckley had been doing a bit of rapid thinking in the minute that had passed and he was already congratulating himself on the success of the heroic measures that he had adopted.

As his rival had said, a little jealousy was sometimes effective. The thought had barely flashed through his mind before he was offering his arm to Marion.

"Permit me, please," he said, in his softest tones. "My carriage will join me at the Congressional Library, and as the street before the Capitol will be kept fairly clear, we may be able to drive past and so catch a glimpse of the Presidential party on the porch of the building."

"Oh, how perfectly delightful!" cried Marion, happily. "But are we not imposing upon your hospitality, Colonel Appleby?" she added, quickly.

A glance of ardent admiration accompanied the gentleman's low answer; then the man who was masquerading under the name of another, led them into B street, and around to the library.

Not once did Marion or Bert dream that they were being deceived, even though they found no carriage waiting at the library.

"Just run in and take a look at the building," their escort said to them, jovially. "You'll find it worth looking at, and you can join me when you are ready. No doubt the crowds in the street have delayed the carriage."

As soon as they were gone, the colonel acted quickly, and ten minutes later there was a handsome carriage at the foot of the broad stone steps, in which the pseudo Colonel Appleby was calmly sitting.

CHAPTER IV.

A GLIMPSE OF THE PRESIDENT.

This was a pleasure that neither Marion nor her friends had dreamed of—to be riding in a Congressman's carriage upon this great occasion.

As they drove slowly through the crowded streets, they gazed eagerly about, while their host pointed out important individuals and explained every detail of the panorama before them.

Bert Jackson was too much interested in the scene to think much about his father's friend, so the tricky colonel escaped without much questioning.

Captain Hobart's name was perfectly familiar to him, and as he, too, had been in the war, he did not feel at all alarmed at betraying himself, so he could enter heartily into his ruse to outrival the real Colonel Appleby.

He loved Miss MacGregor, and he had determined to win her. It mattered little how the game of hearts was played, so long as he was victorious.

If he could only succeed in arousing her jealousy one point would be gained, and here was a golden opportunity, for Miss Marlowe was a genuine beauty, before whom even the lovely Emelie paled.

It was a risky thing to use the colonel's name, for the Southern pride of his rival would never brook such a thing, and Bob Hinckley knew he was treading upon dangerous ground when he did it.

But he was desperate, now that his secret was out. Before all Washington was laughing at his position in the matter, something must be done to win a smile from Miss MacGregor. With this aim in view, he made himself as agreeable as possible, and as they passed and repassed the Executive Mansion, he kept a sharp lookout for Miss MacGregor, whom he expected to see in her carriage at any minute.

Just then a carriage passed them, containing a quiet party. It was Chief Justice Fuller and three members of his family.

"He's on his way to administer the oath, I suppose," said Bert, staring

Marion's cheeks flushed a little as she turned from watching the carriage.

"I knew a lot of the late Chief Justice Waite's relations," she said, with a trace of pride. "I lived near them in Connecticut. He was a great man, wasn't he, and he had such a nice daughter. Why, when I was a little girl, Miss Mamie Waite was my ideal! I used to think if I could be like her I would be perfectly happy!"

"Humph! You were a thousand times prettier than she was," said Bert, quickly; then he turned to the Congressman with a brief explanation.

"You see, both Miss Marlowe and myself came from Connecticut, Colonel Appleby. She was a farmer's daughter, while I was an orphan, and a pauper. I was brought up on a poor farm, and Marion helped me to run away. I went to New York, and a little later she came, too, and since then we've been just like brother and sister."

"Yes, I feel responsible for Bert, in a way," laughed Marion. "He ran away one dark night with nothing between him and starvation but my poor little five dollars! That was an awful night! The worst I ever experienced! It was the night my twin sister, Dollie, was lured away from our home by a mesmerist, and I really think, between that and poor Bert's danger, I very nearly turned gray headed. You see, any one else would have advised him not to run away. He was almost ragged, and barefooted into the bargain, yet I did all I could to induce him to go! Anything was better than the life he was living at the poor farm!"

"You bet!" was Bert's reply, as he smiled at the colonel.

"But you say Captain Hobart Canfield adopted you," said that gentleman, quickly. "Now, why in the world didn't he adopt Miss Marlowe?"

"Oh, he's dead stuck on boys! I guess that's the reason for his preference," said Bert, laughing. "I was a clerk in a swell grocery store, and the old gentleman used to come in occasionally, and the upshot of it was that he got an idea in his head that I was a full grown cherub, and as he was dying for an heir, he promptly adopted me."

"And now he lets you go on the stage," said the colonel, a little wonderingly.

"Sure! He'd let me ride on the moon, if I

wanted to, and the thing could be managed! Oh, there's only one dad in the world, and that's my newly-acquired governor! If all the boys had fathers like him, there'd be no further use for jails or State prisons!"

Bert was watching the crowd as he spoke, and had just caught sight of another familiar face, when Marion suddenly leaned forward and touched him on the shoulder.

"Oh, Bert! Look quick! There are Mr. Temple and Miss Ellis! Won't they be surprised to see us in this carriage!"

"I'm afraid they won't see us," said Alma Allyn, anxiously.

"Oh, won't they!" cried Bert, with a knowing grin. The next second he stood up in the carriage and gave a war whoop that made the crowd fairly hold its ears for the space of a second.

"Oh, Bert! How dreadfully ill-mannered!" cried Marion, with a glance at their host. "The colonel will think you are very rude to shout from his carriage!"

"Let him shout! I like it!" was the laughing reply. "I was a boy once myself, and a noisy one, too, I tell you; but did your friends see you, Jackson?" he added, looking at Bert.

"I don't think so, colonel! But, gee whiz! Look at that lady in the carriage! She is staring at me as if I was a genuine Indian! No, it isn't me, it's you she is staring at, Marion!"

The words had scarcely passed his lips when the colonel raised his hat. He bowed indifferently to the lady in the carriage, and then smiled sweetly at Marion.

"It is Miss Emilie MacGregor, one of our Washington beauties," he said, in answer to her question. "You will see her to-night at the Inauguration Ball, for, of course, you will attend that function, Miss Marlowe."

"Oh, I should be so delighted," said the young girl, gayly. "Alma and I brought dresses, but we were not sure we could go. You see, we depended upon Bert's letter to you to get us an invitation," she added, frankly.

"If you will honor me with your company, Miss Marlowe, the favor will be inestimable, I assure you," was the gallant response; "and if the rest of your company would care to go, I think I can promise to get them tickets."

"Oh, how lovely!" cried Marion, again, and then she happened to think of something.

"Our leading man, Dr. Reginald Brookes, has relatives here," she said, quickly. "His uncle, Mr. Fenton Brookes, is a United States Senator, so he is sure of getting in, with a lady, of course, so that will leave no one to be looked after but Mr. Temple and Mr. Olcott."

"We'll fix them all up," said the colonel, smiling, and then a great shout from the crowd was followed by a burst of music from the band stationed just before the Capitol.

"There he is! There's the President," cried Bert, excitedly.

The ladies stood up in the carriage and stared with all their might.

President McKinley and several members of the Cabinet were on the Capitol porch, and the din of music and cheers was positively deafening.

CHAPTER V.

A GREAT DAY.

An hour later Marion and her friend, Miss Allyn, were in their room at the New Willard, talking over the exciting events of the morning.

"Wasn't the music grand, Alma?" asked the young girl, rapturously. "Oh, it seems to me I never heard anything so superb as the way they played 'The Star Spangled Banner!'"

"And what an impressive ceremony," cried her friend, excitedly. "Just think of Mr. McKinley standing there so calm and dignified, with thousands of people cheering him! Why, my knees would have given way in less than five minutes, and I'd have collapsed completely before I was half through swearing."

"Oh, Alma! The President did not do that, surely!" cried Marion, laughing.

"Certainly he did," was the decided answer. "He swore he'd do all the things that were contained in the oath of office; but, oh, Marion, what is your opinion of Colonel Appleby? Isn't he just the loveliest thing that ever happened! I am sure now it isn't true

what the paper said about him. He does not look a bit like a man who would fight a duel."

Marion hesitated a moment before she replied. There had been something in the Congressman's manner that puzzled her a little.

"I hardly know what to think of him," she said, very honestly. "He was exceedingly kind, of course. I can hardly understand his courtesy, but did you notice how he looked at me, sometimes, Alma? As if there was something about me that was extremely funny."

"You mean that he seemed chuckling to himself over something," said her friend. "Yes, I noticed it, but I laid it to the fact that you and Bert amused him—you were so outspoken, you know, about that letter."

"I thought it best to be honest," said Marion, a little anxiously. "We hoped he would invite us, and I did not see any harm in saying so."

"Well, it wasn't exactly 'according to Hoyle,'" laughed Alma, merrily, "but then you are nothing if not original, dearie! Why, your unconventional ways are your greatest charm! It is no wonder the Congressman was amused. He probably thinks you are a curio."

"I hardly know whether that is a compliment or not," laughed Marion, gayly; "but, if being outspoken and honest is going to brand me a 'curio,' I think I shall be rather proud of it. Really, Alma, I have no patience at all with politic people. I just despise sham and hypocrisy, so why should I employ it? I did want him to invite us to the Inauguration Ball, and I just couldn't help telling him so, when I saw the opportunity!"

Miss Allyn burst into a peal of laughter, and the temptation to tease a little could not be resisted.

"Now, if you had only hinted that an invitation to the President's reception this afternoon would be appreciated, Marion! But perhaps the reception is only intended for the Diplomatic Corps; still, a hint might have been sufficient."

"You can't tease me a bit, Alma," said Marion, with a quiet smile. "Stranger things have happened than our going to the reception. I intend to see the inside of the White House, at any rate, and, perhaps, we can shake hands with the new Vice-President, if we can't with the President!"

"Hello, girls! Are you home safe? Wasn't it grand!" called a voice at that moment, and Miss Ellis came flying into the apartment.

"Where were you, Marion? I could not see you at all!" she went on, eagerly. "Did you have good positions and did you see the President?"

Marion and Miss Allyn looked at each other and smiled, and then Miss Allyn answered:

"Didn't you see us, dear? Why, what a pity! We were riding around in Congressman Colonel Appleby's carriage!"

"Rats! Come off! What are you giving us!" exclaimed the *ingénue*, dropping into Bert Jackson's slang. "You don't expect me to believe that fairy tale, do you?"

"But we were, really," laughed Marion, as she proceeded to explain. "Bert had a letter, you know, to Colonel Appleby from his father, and we met him in the crowd. The next we knew we were in his carriage, and, well, you can imagine how proud we felt, but Bert nearly disgraced us! What do you think, he gave one of his Comanche war-whoops, right in the Congressman's carriage!"

"Bully for Bert! You can't tame that boy!" cried Miss Ellis, delightedly. "Why, ever since we have been engaged, I have been trying to tone him down, but it's no use—he is irrepressible, and I'm getting so I like it! Bert wouldn't be Bert without his slang and his war-whoop!"

"Well, he distinguished himself to-day," said Alma Allyn, laughing; "but Marion has not told you the rest of the story. We are going to the Inauguration Ball in the Pension Building this evening!"

"Pooh! That's nothing! There are others!" retorted Miss Ellis, loftily. "Dr. Brookes has four tickets for the ball, and he is looking for two more; so, unless all signs fail, 'yours, truly,' will attend the ball, also!"

"Here's the doctor now!" cried Miss Allyn, as some one tapped on the door. The next moment she had admitted the handsome leading man of the company.

"Uncle gave me four tickets that he happened to have on hand," he began, gayly, "and he has promised to get two more, if the thing is possible."

"We don't need any more," broke in Marion. "Colonel Appleby has invited Alma and Bert and me, so if you have four, it will be just enough. You can take Miss Ellis, and Mr. Temple and Mr. Olcott can take each other! Oh, won't it be glorious to see such a function!"

Dr. Brookes stared a little, so Miss Allyn made the necessary explanations, and before she had finished, Mr. Temple entered.

"This is a great day in Washington, all right," he began, jovially. "I've seen seven fights, nineteen bands, twelve drum corps and seventy-five pretty women, and if that isn't enough to inaugurate a President, I'd like to know what is!"

"And I saw fifty handsome men, all wearing silk hats," began Miss Allyn, when another voice interrupted:

"Beware of silk hats in Washington, Alma! I've been told by good authority that they either cover a Congressman or a Senator, and both are equally fascinating to the eyes of unsophisticated females!"

"Yes, it is ancient history that our lawmakers are wretched flirts," said Miss Allyn, smiling; "but we've only come in dangerous proximity to one, and he's not very dazzling. There's no danger of either Marion or myself falling a prey to the fascinations of Colonel Appleby."

"A fine Southern soldier! I've heard of him often!" said Mr. Temple, quickly. "You can trust yourselves with Colonel Appleby with perfect safety. I wish I could say as much for some of his brother officers."

Bert Jackson came in as he spoke, and dropped into the nearest chair.

He had just come from watching the end of the vast procession with the colonel.

"Ladies," he said, thrusting his hands into his coat pocket, "what do I hold in my hand?"

"Oh, Bert, you tease," said Marion, divining a new surprise. "What are you going to tell us now?"

"I'm not going to tell you anything; you're going to tell me!" he exclaimed, mischievously, and he drew a large square envelope from his pocket and handed it to her.

"They are for you and Miss Allyn," Bert added, "with the compliments of the colonel!"

Marion quickly tore open the envelope, and drew out two tickets of admission to the reception at the White House that afternoon.

"How perfectly glorious," burst out Alma, as she leaned over Marion's shoulder to read the wording on the tickets. "Why, Marion, we will be introduced to the President!"

"Then the reception is not for the Diplomatic Corps only?" said Marion, in a provoking voice, to her friend, and it was Alma's turn to find herself being teased.

"Well, I suppose that comes next on the programme!" said Bert, getting up. "I'm as weak as a rag now, and the day isn't half over, but here goes for a fresh start! Come on, Mr. Temple!"

"Are you ladies provided for?" asked the manager, starting toward the door.

"Yes, the colonel said his carriage would call for them," spoke up Bert. "I almost forgot that. By the way, Marion, you and Alma had better hurry—you must be ready to go within an hour."

"Then we may not meet again until dinner," said Marion, as she started for the door with Miss Allyn. "You know, Alma and I must prink a little to make ourselves look well this evening."

"Yes," replied Alma, "we don't care to be outshone completely. Still, even if Miss Emilie MacGregor is one of Washington's fairest, our Marion has nothing to fear," she added, proudly.

"Miss MacGregor is Colonel Appleby's sweetheart, is she not?" asked Dr. Brookes, slowly. "My uncle was telling me a little Washington gossip, and I am almost certain that was one of the items."

"Oh, it can't be possible," exclaimed Marion, glancing quickly at Miss Allyn. "Why, we met her to-day, and he bowed very indifferently! Why, he was talking to me and he hardly noticed her!"

"That is strange for a Southern gentleman," said Dr. Brookes, musingly.

"Oh, Marion rattled him! You can't blame him!" laughed Bert; "but do come on, somebody—we may be missing something!"

The two gentlemen followed him from the room, and then Miss Allyn spoke very slowly.

"If Miss MacGregor is the colonel's sweetheart, I am sorry for her, Marion. He'll have no eyes or ears for her while you remain in Washington."

"Really, I think you wrong him, Alma," said Marion, soberly. "He was nice and attentive, but nothing more; still, I must admit I do not understand his manner toward her, and she bowed and smiled so sweetly, too—it is a mystery, Alma."

"Mark my words, he is fickle," was her friend's decided answer. "He may be a brave colonel and a clever Congressman, but a pair of gray eyes that I know of have completely dazzled him. Miss MacGregor will have to play what is known as 'second fiddle.' There'll be no duels over her while you stay in the city."

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

Such a thrill of happiness as Marion felt when she entered the great gate of the White House and approached the door of the President's home!

Carriages were coming and going and, as their own prancing horses drew up at the steps, their new friend, the colonel, appeared upon the porch and they were admitted with as much courtesy as though they had been wives of the Cabinet members.

Neither Marion nor Miss Allyn knew exactly how it had been arranged, but they were allowed to enter the presence of the President with a small number of other visitors immediately after the reception of the Diplomatic Corps, and were permitted to shake hands with him in the most informal manner.

Marion's cheeks flushed with delight as she felt the President's genial grasp, and the smile of admiration which he bestowed upon her was the crowning pleasure of a day of pleasures.

Miss Allyn was right behind her and, as the two moved on, she overheard a remark made by one of the members of the Cabinet:

"What a remarkably handsome girl!"

The compliment was intended for Marion, and Miss Allyn blushed with the pleasure of being able to repeat it.

She, too, had shaken hands with the Chief Executive, and, although it did not affect her as it did Marion, she was really highly elated.

If she were only back at her old work as newspaper reporter, how she would enjoy writing up this scene! It was a magnificent spectacle from start to finish, still the details of each inauguration were almost similar and every one was familiar in some degree with the ceremony.

She glanced over the groups of ladies whom she saw in the different rooms of the White House and decided that, while many of them were handsome and stylish, there was not one as truly beautiful as her companion and dearest friend.

As soon as they were out in the grounds again, she spoke her thoughts freely. She was positively overflowing with ambition for her friend's future.

"Oh, Marion, if you could only be in the position of one of those ladies, the Cabinet ladies, I mean! Wouldn't it be grand?" she cried, enthusiastically. "Or, if you could be the wife of some future President! That would be better yet! Why, you would grace any position with your wonderful beauty and my, oh, my! wouldn't the nation be proud of you!"

"How perfectly absurd, Alma!" said Marion, laughing, but there was a flush on her cheeks as she listened to her friend's enthusiastic utterances.

They had reached the street now and were making their way through the crowds, which were not quite as dense now as they had been in the morning.

"You are ever so much prettier than the prettiest," went on Miss Allyn, "and that is saying a good deal, for some of them are remarkably handsome! But, dearie, did you see Miss Emilie MacGregor staring at you in the Blue Room? I did, and I fancied there was a bit of jealousy in her face. She may not have enjoyed seeing you in the colonel's carriage."

"I wonder what became of him?" said Marion, suddenly. "Of course, we knew he couldn't be with us all the time, but I

thought, perhaps, we might see him again somewhere in the White House."

"Oh, I expect all of the Congressmen and Senators are very busy entertaining to-day. We were very fortunate, indeed, to have as much of his time as we did, but see, here come Bert and Miss Ellis! Who knew they were behind us?"

They had been drifting along the avenue with the crowd as they talked, and were now some distance from the White House and, as Alma spoke she took Marion's arm and hurried her across the wide thoroughfare, which was fairly clear at that moment.

"Where is your carriage, girls?" called out Bert, as he elbowed his way along, almost drawing the *ingénue* after him.

"Oh, we told the colonel when we went in that we would walk home," answered Miss Allyn. "It was quite enough for him to send for us, but the crush is so great that we felt sorry for the horses, and I am sure he appreciated our sentiments on the subject."

"We just met him for a minute, and gee! you ought to hear him praise Marion!" said Bert, laughing. "Oh, Miss MacGregor isn't in it from this time forth! Better look out for her at the ball to-night, Marion! She's liable to fly at you and scratch your eyes out!"

"What a sensation that would create, and, oh, what an 'ad!'" laughed Miss Allyn, gayly. "Why, it would get in all the papers and what would be the result? The Temple Theatrical Company would receive an invitation to play in Washington! It is even possible that the residents would give us the theatre."

"I hardly think any such dire event will occur," said Marion, laughing. "Washington society belles are too well bred for that, and then, dear me, why should she be jealous? She is a grand lady, no doubt, while I am only an actress!"

"You are as much account as any of them, Marion," said Bert, as he tucked her hand under his arm, "only you are too modest to know it."

Marion laughed merrily at his words, but made no reply.

"How proud the dear old commodore would be if he were here with you, Marion," said Miss Ellis. "It would be such a pleasant sequel to your experience in Omaha."

Marion's flushed cheeks paled at the allusion to Omaha, for it was in that city that she had passed through a frightful experience, that of being with a gentleman when he was "held up" by highwaymen, after which she had been dragged from her saddle by a lariat thrown by one of the ruffians.

She did not reply, and Miss Allyn changed the subject by calling her attention to some of the elegant residences.

"You had better come to Washington and live when you decide to get married," said her friend, as she stopped to stare at a row of attractive houses on Rhode Island avenue. "See! Here is the nation's gift to Admiral Dewey. It is as empty as vanity. You might come and rent it, Marion!"

The fair young girl glanced up at the vacant house, and her eyes twinkled merrily.

"I don't believe I'd care to live there! I'd rather live in the White House," she said, rather demurely.

"So would Dewey," laughed Bert; "so be warned in time, Marion. Don't let your longings for the White House make you refuse a Congressman. Oh, I'd like nothing better than to see you established here! It is the neatest, the prettiest and the gayest city in the Union!"

"Quite a change from Hickorytown," laughed Marion, gayly. "Oh, Bert, how strange it all seems and how incredible! Just think, a few months ago we were poor children in the country. Why, a farm-house kitchen and a straw bed and hoeing and milking was our portion, and here we are now conspiring to live at the national capital! It's so funny that I can hardly keep from laughing when I think of it."

"Where there's a will there's a way," quoted Bert, solemnly, as he turned them back toward the main thoroughfare. "We've already accomplished things that we did not dream were in our power; so who is to say that our present aims are impossible?"

"There is nothing impossible, except our crossing that avenue," broke in Miss Allyn. "Look, Bert! The crowds are surging this

way! Something must be happening! Let's go a little nearer and see what it is! It may be the President going back to the Capitol!"

There was a hurried rush in the direction of the excitement, then Bert suddenly stopped and tried to draw his charges back. The crowd was closing in around them and a dangerous crush was threatened. Then a squad of mounted blue-coats swept into view. They were breaking a path for the President's carriage.

"Quick! Stand here!" yelled Bert, as he saw an opening just beside him.

The grand cavalcade was fast approaching and the crowd was going wild.

Marion had just caught a glimpse of a pair of prancing horses when her arm was jostled rudely by a rough-looking fellow.

She paid no attention at first, and then something prompted her to look at him more closely.

Never had she beheld such a vicious face! The features were set in a look of desperate cruelty, and the bloodshot eyes were ferocious as well as cunning.

He was slowly edging his way toward the very thickest part of the crowd, and, as Marion stared at him eagerly, she felt instinctively that he was waiting for some one. With a thrill of horror, she decided that it was the President.

CHAPTER VII.

"HERE COMES THE PRESIDENT."

There was no time nor opportunity to whisper her fears to Bert, for the young man was having all he could do to keep his charges together and, besides, the music of the bands was becoming deafening. The crowd pushed and jammed, and Marion was forced back toward the buildings; but, by a heroic effort, she managed to keep the man in sight, and, by standing on tiptoe, she could get an occasional glimpse of the gay paraders.

Suddenly a great mass of the crowd wedged itself in between her and Bert, and the next she knew, she was standing alone, with the excited people crowding upon her from all directions.

Marion's first thought was to call Bert's name, and so direct him to her; but, when she saw the sea of faces, she felt that it would be useless, and after all, there was safety in such a multitude if only she could keep her feet so they would not trample on her.

"Look out there! You're jamming this girl!" bawled a voice just behind her, and Marion suddenly felt a strong arm thrown protectingly over her shoulder.

She tried to look up to thank him, but it was almost impossible and, for a moment, she could hardly get her breath, the jam was so terrific.

"You're a stranger, I take it, and you've been separated from your party," went on the jovial voice. "Better let me get you out of this mess or I won't answer for the consequences."

Marion was tempted to acquiesce when she happened to catch sight of that hideous face again. The fellow she had seen before was right ahead of her. He was still skulking in the crowd, but now his face was more haggard than ever and he was fairly trembling with excitement of some kind or another.

"Oh, no! I'll stay and risk it!" she answered, quickly. "Anyway, we could not get out now and, perhaps, my friends will find me! It was only about twenty feet away that we were separated, I think, sir!"

"I guess you are right about not getting out," laughed the man. "It's the worst jam I ever saw, and I've been in a good many!"

Another move of the crowd nearly swept Marion off her feet, but just at that minute she heard Bert's voice shouting to her.

"Marion! Where are you, Marion?" he cried, at the top of his lungs; then the crowd roared heartily as he bawled out:

"I'll give a complimentary ticket to the best theatrical show in Salt Lake City to the person who will find my friend for me! I lost her ten minutes ago! Has any one seen her? You can't mistake her. She's the prettiest girl in the country!"

Marion burst out laughing. She was glad Bert was so near her, but his remarks were, to say the least, a little embarrassing.

But there was nothing to do but answer his

cry, for she knew that, in spite of his fun, Bert was genuinely worried.

"Here I am, Bert!" she called out, in her musical voice. "I'd come if I could, but I can't move a step. In fact, I have only one foot on the ground this minute!"

"Ouch! You're in luck!" yelled some one a few feet behind her. "I have both of mine on the ground and there's fifteen people standing on them. Oh! won't somebody please get an ambulance or something?"

"Here we are, Marion!" cried Bert, as he suddenly reached over and touched her shoulder. "There ain't much left of us and we've telescoped about four dozen inoffensive citizens! Couldn't let you stay out of my sight another minute, so get hold of my coat-tails; that is, if I have any! My own opinion is that they may have vanished!"

"If they had, we'd have vanished with them," cried Miss Ellis, over his shoulder. "I've held on like grim death, but I can't hang on much longer! And to think that all we've seen of the parade is a lot of plumes. Not a man have I seen below his hat brim!"

"Oh, but the music is grand!" cried Marion, as they all held on to each other, "and, now that I am found, I don't mind anything else, but do tell me what is coming now, Alma!"

Miss Allyn stood on tip toe and peered over the heads of the crowd.

"It's a line of carriages, I think, Marion! Oh, yes! I can see them now! Oh, but it's the President!"

There was a general craning of necks and a tremendous shout. Marion was carried along with the crowd close to the edge of the line of march, but this time her friends were close behind her. Another burst of music followed immediately, and then the enormous crowd went mad with patriotism, and the original three cheers were prolonged into a dozen, the whole seeming to Marion like a perfect pandemonium.

She peered eagerly forward, trying to see all she could and had just caught a glimpse of the Chief Executive when some one crowded in ahead of her. Marion drew back involuntarily, and then caught her breath with a gasp.

The man who had pushed past her so rudely was the one she had seen twice before, and, as her quick eyes scanned him from head to foot, she suddenly caught the gleam of a shining pistol barrel.

For a second her heart seemed to stand still, for she was sure she knew his motive, then, as he wedged himself violently into the very thick of the crowd, the brave girl struggled after him with a sharp cry of warning.

"Stop him! Stop him, somebody! He is going to shoot the President!"

CHAPTER VIII.

AN HOUR OF EXCITEMENT.

Marion's startled cry caused scores of persons to turn and, almost instantly, every one grasped the situation. The beautiful girl had thrown her arms around a coarse, brutal-looking fellow who was clutching in his hand a wicked-looking revolver. The fellow struggled in her grasp, but Marion held on. Her arms were strong from her days of toil on the farm, and, in her horror at the ruffian's intention, they became like bands of iron.

For a full minute no one moved to her aid. They seemed paralyzed with the horror of the situation, then, with a fiendish howl, the crowd pounced upon the fellow.

If it had not been for the presence of the police a panic would have followed, but Bert roared out to the captain, who appeared on the scene at that moment with a half dozen men, and the crowd was driven back, all except a dozen or so stalwart men who had sprung to Marion's assistance.

In the space of a second the fellow was taken into custody. The next minute Marion was caught up bodily and exhibited to the crowd as the brave young girl who had saved the President.

Such a commotion as followed! The enormous throng of people cheered her brave act to the echo.

The cavalcade passed without the President even dreaming what had happened, but the admiring crowds would not lose sight of Marion for a minute.

Bert had just promised the captain of police to bring her to appear against the fellow when a loud cry of horror issued from the

crowd. In the intense excitement the fellow had slipped away, and the police were baffled at every turn by the thousands who thronged the thoroughfare.

How Bert got Marion back to the hotel he hardly knew, but the crowds surrounded the famous hostelry for nearly an hour, and cheer after cheer was given before they could be dispersed by the busy "blue coats" of the city.

"Well, if this doesn't beat all! Oh, I'm so glad I came!" was Bert's first exclamation, when he led his charges safely into their apartments. "Just look at me! I'm a wreck! There isn't a whole garment left on me! Blest if my collar button isn't away around in the back, and, as for a necktie, I doubt if I ever had one! Now, if some of those galoots had wished to show their appreciation of Marion's courage, why in thunder didn't they charter a balloon and bring us back to the hotel? We could have landed on the roof and come down the skylight; as it is, we are all battered to pieces from the excess of their enthusiasm."

"I haven't begun to get my breath," said Alma Allyn, panting. "I never had such a tussle before in my life! There's one thing sure, we won't any of us be likely to forget Washington in a hurry!"

"But just think how perfectly awful it would have been if he had shot the President!" cried Miss Ellis, with a shudder. "Oh, I shall never forget how vicious he looked, and to think that our Marion should be the one to thwart him!"

Marion's cheeks were still pale with the awful remembrance, and she dropped into an easy chair, for she was worn out with the excitement.

"It is too bad he got away, still you could hardly blame the 'cops,'" said Bert, soberly. "I don't believe he'll try it again, though, and, as soon as the crowds disperse, they may be able to track him."

"I heard some one say that he was a well known character," said Alma Allyn, "and, if that is the case, they'll catch him sure, unless he is wise enough to get out of Washington."

"When he first jostled my arm, I did not think much about it," said Marion, slowly, "then, all of a sudden, something prompted me to turn, and, when I caught sight of the pistol, I seemed to understand instantly. I knew he was skulking in the crowd trying to get a shot at the President."

"And how you did go for him!" cried Bert, admiringly. "You must be as strong as a giant! I don't see how you held him!"

"That is where I have the advantage over most of the city ladies," laughed Marion. "Churning and milking and hoeing the garden are bound to make muscle. It is only idleness that makes so much weakness."

"That is why golf and tennis are so healthful," spoke up Dr. Brookes, "but I fancy that this siege has about tired you out, Marion, and, as for Bert, he looks as if he had been playing football."

"Oh, I'm a wreck! A total but triumphant wreck!" laughed Bert. "Just think of it, doc, I had three of them on my hands! Why, there were two or three times when I nearly got rattled, but here they are, safe and sound—what there is left of them—and I move that they rest a minute before dinner."

"It will have to be more than a minute," said Alma Allyn. "Why, I feel like a rubber ball that has completely collapsed! If I sit down, I am afraid you'll have to raise me with a derrick."

"Nevertheless you will do well to try it," said the doctor, smiling. "It has been a hard day for us, so what must it have been for you? Once more I congratulate our manager on his good, sound sense in discouraging Ida Inez and Mrs. Burnside from taking the trip. They are probably resting now in the hotel at Pueblo, while we, well, perhaps the less said about our conditions, the better."

"Here's a message for Miss Marlowe," said Mr. Temple, coming in. "Are you able to answer it, Marion, or shall I do it for you?"

Marion smiled at him sweetly, as she took the letter.

"It is from the President himself!" she exclaimed, springing to her feet. "They have told him what happened, and also my name! Oh, do read it, Alma! I am too nervous to even hold it!"

The young girl spoke truthfully. She was trembling like a leaf. The terrible excitement of the last hour had been almost too much for her.

"He expresses his most sincere thanks for the inestimable favor you have done him, and wishes to assure you of his unbounded admiration of your loyalty and courage, and oh, Marion, just listen! He intends to thank you publicly as soon as opportunity offers!"

Marion put her hands to her face and sank back in her chair, while Bert threw up his hat in the excess of his exuberance.

"The President is a brick! Just wait until I am old enough to vote for him! But loan me that letter a minute, Marion, and I'll go out and get a frame for it!"

"It's too late, Bert, and, besides, there are no shops open," said Mr. Temple, laughing. "Marion can wear it next to her heart, and, perhaps, it will prove a talisman for good and keep her free from dreadful adventures."

"She needs something to do that, all right," said Bert, soberly; "but her adventure in Washington has been the right sort. She came here unknown and she is going away a heroine! For once she is getting the best of a thrilling experience!"

"Oh, but the day is not over yet," said Miss Ellis, thoughtlessly. "It is always Marion's luck to get into some sort of a scrape, still I don't just see how she can when we are all of us with her."

"This is to be a red letter day in her career," spoke up Dr. Brookes, quickly. "She has already done something that will make her name known to the ends of the earth! I prophesy that to-night will add lustre to her laurels! She will be the belle of the Inauguration Ball; without a doubt, and, more than that, she will be the most honored among them, for has she not, to-day, saved the life of the Chief Executive?"

The silence was almost profound, and then Marion dropped her hands from her face, suddenly showing that her big, gray eyes were sparkling with mischief.

"Oh, just think of it! That fellow might have missed his aim! He might have put a bullet in a brick wall of one of the houses opposite. There's no way of proving that he would have killed the President," she cried, merrily.

"Nevertheless the chances are that he would," said Bert, firmly. "We are not going to allow you to detract from your own glory, Marion."

"Then I have nothing more to say," murmured the young girl, sweetly. "Only I wish I was half as wonderful as you all say I am. It is awful to feel that one is only a plain, simple girl, and that all one's friends are laboring under a delusion."

"We enjoy the delusion, dearie, so don't begrudge it," laughed Miss Allyn; "but I move that you gentlemen adjourn, so that we can dress for dinner."

CHAPTER IX.

THE TWO COLONELS AGAIN.

"Alma, dear, I want to ask you a question," said Marion, as the two friends sat down to rest for a few moments.

Miss Allyn leaned her head back upon the handsomely upholstered chair and smiled as she answered: "What is it, Marion, or, perhaps, I can guess. You are going to ask me what I am thinking of ordering for dinner."

"Nonsense. It is not half so important a question as that," said her friend, as she curled herself up on a broad couch and arranged the soft pillows so as to be perfectly comfortable.

"Then, you are intending to ask me how I expect to feel when we get back to our work. Well, I can answer that easily. I expect to feel pretty 'shaky.'"

"You are a poor guesser, so I'll relieve your mind. My question is this: What do you think of our staying away from the Inauguration Ball? Would it be a great disappointment, Alma?"

Miss Allyn straightened herself up and tried to look severe.

"Now, see here, Marion Marlowe! I know what you are driving at!" she said, shaking her finger, threateningly. "You are trying to avoid being thanked in public. Well, now, you can believe me, dearie, it will not be done this evening, in fact I very

much doubt if the President will attend the ball."

Marion looked relieved, and a deep sigh followed the opinion. She was actually frightened at the anticipation of such an honor.

"He may 'look in,' as the Prince of Wales used to do, you know," went on Miss Allyn, "but I fancy the ball is more of a general jollification, intended for the friends of the President, to work off their superfluous enthusiasm. He will probably stay at the White House and receive distinguished callers. I hope to goodness he will, if it is making you nervous, dearie."

"Well, I'm sure I don't wish him to stay away on my account," laughed Marion, "but, honestly, Alma, I do not care to see him. His letter is quite as much as I can manage. I think I would feel positively insignificant if he should ever thank me in public."

"Well, the friends of the President don't think that you are very insignificant," said Alma, proudly. "They think you were a brave girl to tackle that fellow. Why, he might have shot you in the excitement of the moment."

"Far better to be me than the President of the nation," said Marion, dreamily. Her head had sunk a little lower, and she was fast drifting into dreamland.

"Poor girl! She's tired out!" whispered Miss Allyn, softly, as she took a coverlid from the bed and laid it over her companion. Then she went back to her chair, but did not seat herself, for some one tapped on the door and she tiptoed across the room to open it.

"Where's Marion?" began Bert, but Miss Allyn stopped him with a gesture. The next minute the young man drew back into the corridor and nearly bent double with laughter

"Well, of all things! Here's a delegate from the President himself to escort Marion to the White House, and she is sound asleep and totally unconscious of the honor. Wake her up, quick, Alma, and get her into her swell togs! She mustn't miss this! Why, it will make her famous!"

Miss Allyn glanced back into the room where Marion lay sleeping, and an anxious look crept into her face.

"I hate to disturb her, but, of course, I must," she said, softly; then she crossed the room again and touched Marion on the shoulder.

"I'll tell him she is coming," cried Bert, as he darted away. "It will never do to keep the delegate in suspense."

Marion awoke with a start and listened in wonder as her friend told her. She could hardly believe it possible that the President had sent for her.

"Hurry, Marion! Hurry!" cried Miss Allyn, as she began overhauling their trunks. "I'll be lady's maid and dress you just as fast as I can! Oh, I am so delighted, I can hardly think! Do please hurry, dearie!"

Marion rubbed her eyes as she rose from the couch. She was having a hard time to realize what had happened.

"Just think, you'll see Mrs. McKinley and some of the Cabinet ladies, without a doubt," went on Miss Allyn. "Oh, dear! I wish they knew what a dear, sweet girl you are, and how lovely you look on the stage, and what an artist you are, and all the rest of it!"

"Oh, Alma! How you do go on!" laughed Marion, merrily. "As if that would interest the first ladies of the land!"

Miss Allyn did not pay the slightest attention, but rattled on in her excited fashion.

"And if they knew how many offers you had received to marry rich men, I guess their eyes would stick out! Why, Dr. Brookes is rich, and Archie Ray is rich, and just think of Commodore Dickson, he's the richest man in Arizona! If you had married him, they would be sure to respect you, Marion! Oh, you needn't frown! I know the world, dearie. Nearly every one in the land bows down to money! Of course, they'll all be sweet and patronizing and well bred and all that, but how they would stare if they knew the truth, that you could marry a far richer man than ever lived in the White House!"

"If I can't win their respect on something besides a sound-money basis, I'm afraid I'll have to do without it," laughed Marion, merrily. "I am only a poor girl, earning my living on the stage, and, really, Alma, I

haven't the slightest ambition to be anything else, except, of course, I'd like to be a great artist."

She was hurrying with her toilet as she talked, and, as the last detail was finished, her friend stepped back and looked at her.

"You are as sweet as a peach in that blue gown," she said, enthusiastically. "You must not be surprised at anything the President says to you."

Then they both stepped into the hall, where an attendant met them, and started to escort Marion to the room where the President's delegate was waiting.

Suddenly another bellboy appeared at the head of the stairs and approached her with a card in his hand.

"A gentleman to see you, miss," said the boy.

Marion stopped and took the card from the tray held out to her, glancing at it curiously.

It was the regulation bit of pasteboard to be found in all hotel offices, and across it was scrawled in ink the name of "Colonel Appleby."

"You can excuse yourself, Marion, dear," said Alma, quickly. "Tell him the President wishes your company, and that he isn't in it!"

Alma was half joking, but it was just what Marion did, only she made her message a trifle more courteous.

The bellboy received her message and darted down the stairway.

Marion's thoughts immediately turned back to the prospect before her, and she was smiling happily as she descended in the elevator.

As the attendant escorted her through the main corridor, she caught a glimpse of the man she knew as Colonel Appleby in one of the reception-rooms.

"This way, miss," said the attendant, pointing to a large parlor further on.

A moment later she was at the door of the spacious room, and a tall, military-looking gentleman was bowing to her courteously.

"Miss Marion Marlowe, I am sure," he said, with a courtly salute. "Permit me to introduce myself as the delegate of the President to escort you to the White House. I am Colonel Horace Appleby, at your service."

CHAPTER X.

THE IDENTITY OF THE CONGRESSMAN.

For an instant the young girl was too bewildered to even speak; then her wits came back to her, and she returned the bow gracefully.

What could it mean? Were there two Colonel Applebys? The thing was possible, but hardly probable. The gentleman was chatting pleasantly as he led her to the carriage, so Marion had an opportunity to calm her emotions, and by the time the magnificent equipage was headed for the White House she was able to take her part in the pleasant conversation.

The streets were still crowded, and she was cheered on every side. Everyone seemed to recognize the brave girl who had saved the President.

The rest passed like a dream. It did not seem possible that it could be true. The young girl was almost overwhelmed with words of praise from the distinguished group standing in one of the spacious rooms of the White House.

The Cabinet ladies who were present all shook her hand warmly, and there were tears in the eyes of the mistress of the White House as she gazed upon the young girl who, in all probability, had saved her husband's life.

President McKinley held out his hand to her for the second time that day, and, although hundreds had passed before him, he recalled her sweet face perfectly.

It was the proudest moment in Marion's life, but, in spite of her embarrassment, she was able to smile back at the Chief Executive as he gave her hand a grateful pressure.

How different it all would have been if the assassin had been successful!

The thought flashed through her brain as she passed once more from the White House.

"The Temple Theatrical Company is waiting to give you another reception, Marion!" cried Bert, as soon as she entered the hotel. "We are so proud of our start that we are in

danger of bursting! Gee! what an honor you have had, but you deserve it, girlie!"

"Do tell us all about it, Marion!" cried Miss Allyn. "We are so anxious to hear that we have actually postponed our dinner! Was the President nice, and did you see Mrs. McKinley?"

Marion answered their questions as fast as she could, but there was something in her mind that was puzzling her terribly.

She waited until her friends had exhausted their enthusiasm and then turned to Bert, with the bewildering question:

"What is Colonel Appleby's first name, Bert?"

Bert thought a minute before he answered:

"I think—yes, I know it is, Horace Richmond Appleby."

"Then can there be two?" she asked again, the look of bewilderment in her eyes growing a little deeper.

"Not that I ever heard of, but why do you ask? Has our impromptu host developed a double?"

"I'm afraid he has," said Marion, slowly. "Anyway, there were two Colonel Applebys down in the parlor. One was the gentleman who treated us so beautifully to-day, and the other was the delegate that escorted me to the White House!"

"Gee whiz! that's queer! I'll investigate!" said Bert, quickly. "I'll go down to the office and ask the clerk. A hotel clerk, you know, is a walking encyclopædia, with an almanac appendix and a time-table supplement."

He disappeared instantly, and Marion shook her head.

"I can't believe there are two—but, of course, there may be. It's a Southern name, but it would be strange, indeed, if there were two colonels and two Congressmen by the name of Appleby."

In less than five minutes Bert came running back.

"Here's a note for you," he said, breathlessly, holding out an envelope toward Marion; "and, what do you think, there's only one Appleby in town, and that's Colonel Horace Richmond Appleby, the one who is reported to be in love with Miss Emilie MacGregor!"

"Then your delegate must have been a fake," began Miss Allyn.

"Or your 'mash' is a masquerader," broke in Miss Ellis, quickly.

"One or the other of them is bogus, all right," muttered Bert; "but I'd awfully hate to think it was the gentleman who took us in his carriage! It's mean to be suspicious of a man who has done you a favor."

"Oh, but the other Colonel Appleby was exactly as nice," said Marion, quickly. "In fact, I almost think he was a little nicer. There was something so refined and so delicate about him—something, I hardly know what, but it was different from the other. I think I would trust him quicker—there, that exactly defines it!"

"Well, we're up against a mystery, but that's nothing new," said Bert, laughing. "But we can solve our riddle at the ball to-night. The one that escorts Miss MacGregor will certainly be the original."

"It is to be hoped that she knows them apart," remarked Mr. Temple, dryly. "But, anyway, it doesn't matter which is which, does it, Marion? You had the ride in the carriage and you saw the President!"

"That's about the size of it!" laughed Bert. "What's in a name, anyway, when you are out on a lark. A Congressman is a Congressman the whole world over—and, besides, we were warned about those 'silk hats' in the first place, Marion."

The young girl tried to smile, but she was still sorely puzzled.

She disliked to think ill of a person who had been so kind to her. Suddenly she remembered the note Bert had handed to her, and which she had laid carelessly on the corner of the table. She picked it up eagerly and looked at the address. The handwriting was the same as that on the card which she had received just before leaving the hotel to go to the White House.

"That may explain. Do hurry and read it," said Miss Allyn, as Marion broke the seal. Then they all waited in silence until she had read it.

"Colonel Appleby, our colonel, wishes the pleasure of escorting me to the ball. He will call for me at eleven, and hopes I will not disappoint him. He says he has canceled several other engagements in the hope of receiving this honor."

"Well, that don't look much as if he was desperately smitten with Miss MacGregor," began Bert, a trifle angrily.

"Or else he is throwing her down hard," broke in Miss Ellis.

"Shall you go with him, Marion?" asked Miss Allyn, a little curiously.

"Better beware of a combination of silk hats and borrowed names, Marion! That is what we fellows would call a 'tough proposition,'" urged Bert, warningly.

"I'm sure I don't know what to do," was the young girl's answer. "If he is the genuine colonel, I hate to offend him, but, of course——"

"Hold on a minute! I'll ask the clerk what he looks like. I forgot to do that be-

fore," exclaimed Bert, darting from the apartment.

"Tall, military, about forty-five, blue eyes, long mustache," he rattled off, as he came back.

"That describes them both," said Marion, slowly.

"But the genuine colonel is as gray as a badger! Now, our friend with the carriage was only a little gray, so I guess we'll have to call him the bogus individual! Now, will somebody please tell me what he is driving at, anyway, or is that just a passing jest of one of our dignified Congressmen?"

"We'll answer all your questions later," said Dr. Brookes, smiling; "or, better, we will let the genuine colonel answer them the next time we see him."

"Oh, I have an idea!" cried Marion, quickly. "Who knows but that one Colonel Appleby is a stranger in town? He may be here just for the day, and we have mixed them up. It isn't at all likely that they both are Congressmen; and yet they both may be friends of the President!"

"We'll give them the benefit of the doubt, anyway," chimed in Miss Allyn; "and, as the doctor says, they will speak for themselves, for we are sure to meet them both at the ball this evening."

"That settles the question for the present, then," laughed Bert, as he started toward the door again. "This is the one day of our lives that we are not to be bothered solving riddles and enigmas! Come on, all hands! We must finish painting the town! I'm off for a look at the War Department!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE INAUGURATION BALL.

It was nearly midnight before Marion entered the ball-room in the Pension building. When she did her eyes were dazzled by the blaze that greeted them. Everywhere were patriotic emblems and gay decorations, and such a brilliant assemblage she had never before gazed upon.

Her escort was dressed in his colonel's uniform, and looked very grand, indeed; but from the moment of their leaving the hotel the young girl thought he acted queerly. He was not so gay as he had been during the drive in the morning.

Not a word did she whisper of her unpleasant suspicions, for the gentleman was so courteous in his attentions, that she could not bear to accuse him. It was better to have the explanation come from some other source than to take the chance of committing an error.

"How perfectly grand!" were her first words, as he led her to a seat; then she looked up at him a little wistfully as she saw where he was seating her.

"Oh, please don't seat me here! It is too conspicuous," she murmured. "See, there are a lot of people staring at me already!"

"Perhaps they know you are the brave girl who saved the President," was the smiling answer, as the colonel looked down into her beautiful face admiringly.

"I do hope not," said Marion, with a little gasp. "Oh, it will be dreadfully embarrassing if any more people look at me!"

The colonel had taken a sharp look in the direction that she indicated, and an expression of satisfaction fairly shone on his features.

"That is Miss MacGregor and her party—the lady I showed you this morning," he said, almost indifferently. "She is envying you your glorious hair, no doubt, Miss Marlowe; while that gentleman at her right is envying me. He is one of our Senators, who is quite infatuated with Miss MacGregor."

There was a rush of words to Marion's lips, but a crash of martial music from the band prevented her from speaking them. Suddenly she turned to her companion with a charming smile.

It had come to her to criticise her own simple garments.

"I'm afraid I ought not to have let you bring me," she said, as softly as she could. "My dress is so plain, and I have no diamonds. If it had not been for me, you would have escorted one of those ladies."

The look of admiration in the colonel's eyes made her blush a little as he replied, without the slightest hesitation:

"In spite of your simple dress, which is exquisite, if you will allow me to say so, the ladies are all staring at you with envious eyes. Is it possible that you are too modest to know what that means, Miss Marlowe?"

Marion's gray eyes fell before his ardent glance, and just at that instant the other Colonel Appleby came toward them, accompanied by Miss MacGregor.

Marion glanced up just in time to see a curious look flash into her companion's eyes. The next moment, with only a salute, the gentleman passed, and she noticed that Miss MacGregor was leaning heavily on his arm, and that she was glaring at her as if she fairly hated her.

What was the meaning of that look?

She asked herself the question, and then turned abruptly to ask it of her companion.

"Oh, here you are, Marion! Isn't it grand?" cried a voice in her ear.

Bert, with Miss Ellis on his arm, was just

passing. The next moment they were swallowed up in the crowd on the dancing floor, and Marion's attention was attracted to the forming of the grand march, which the colonel insisted upon her joining.

Ten minutes later she was once more seated and overlooking the ball-room, while her escort excused himself to speak to some one.

The moment he was gone a gentleman seated himself at her side.

Marion glanced up quickly. It was the other Colonel Appleby, the one who had escorted her to the presence of the President.

"I am delighted to see you here," he began, very politely. "It is a sight worth seeing once, the Inauguration Ball, and it should be particularly interesting to one who has just saved the life of our President.

Marion blushed at his words, but she was trembling with eagerness to ask him a question.

She could not quite understand why she should care so much, and, before she could frame the words, it suddenly occurred to her that the true reason for her eagerness to solve the identity of the two colonels was that she might know which was the lover of Emilie MacGregor.

"It is grand, and I am enjoying it, oh, so much," she whispered, with a look into his eyes; "but, oh, Colonel Appleby, there is something that I wish so much to know, and yet—well, to tell you the truth, I do not know how to ask it."

The elderly colonel bent toward her with a fatherly smile.

"My dear child," he said, gently, "pray ask anything you wish. I shall be only too glad to answer, if it is within my ability."

Marion laughed a little nervously, but she was growing desperate now. She was determined to solve the mystery that was vexing her so thoroughly.

She waited a moment until there was a lull in the music. Then, as she caught a glimpse of her escort, she suddenly touched the colonel's arm, and almost pointed to his brother officer.

"Who is that?" she asked, in a mischievous whisper. "He is my escort, I know; but is his name Colonel Appleby?"

The gentleman at her side almost sprang to his feet as she spoke. The next moment he calmed himself, and replied with a question:

"Tell me why you ask before I answer, please," he said, briefly. "Did he tell you that he was Colonel Appleby?"

Marion nodded her head, and then told her story hastily.

When she had finished the face of her companion was white with anger, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that he could restrain his language.

"He has deceived you!" he said, quietly; "but wait, Miss Marlowe. I will go to him at once and demand an explanation!"

"Oh, don't!"

Marion spoke the words sharply, but the colonel did not hear them. He had already risen, and was making his way across the floor, and as Marion's glance followed him she caught her breath sharply. Her own escort had met Miss MacGregor and offered his arm. They would be a little surprised at the coming interruption.

CHAPTER XII.

FOR HONOR'S SAKE.

The "honor of a Southern gentleman" has been sung in every tongue, and as Marion watched the proceedings she wondered what would be the outcome of her extraordinary disclosure.

"I guess they'll do very much as other gentlemen would do," she whispered to herself, as she watched the dignified salute which passed between the two men and the courtesy with which they spoke in the presence of a lady.

Miss MacGregor was escorted to her friends before the two colonels retired from the ball-room, and poor Marion was left without any escort, and fairly trembling with eagerness to learn the outcome.

It was growing very warm in the ball-room now, so she rose finally and made her way toward one of the exits, and after turning once or twice she found a cool corridor in which to walk.

There were groups of people standing about, and attendants darted here and there, but no one molested her, so she had time to cool her feverished cheeks and calm herself a little.

Had she done wrong in telling her story to Colonel Appleby?

The question worried her, and yet she could not blame herself for telling him.

Suddenly she was aware of the presence of two ladies near her, but as the corridor was only dimly lighted they did not recognize her.

"They have come out to get cool, too, I guess," was her first thought; then she overheard a few words of hurried conversation.

"Who do you suppose she is, anyway—the girl with the magnificent hair, I mean?"

"I haven't the vaguest idea who she is or where Colonel Bob found her," was the an-

swer. Then a low, musical laugh echoed softly through the corridor.

"Oh, but isn't Emilie green with jealousy, though! Why, a week ago, when she thought Colonel Bob had no eyes nor ears for any one but herself, she ignored him completely and flirted desperately with Colonel Appleby. It is a way our Washington girls have—to yearn for the unattainable! She is foolish to think of Colonel Appleby! He will never marry."

"I don't believe she thought seriously of him. She was only teasing Bob—though of the two, Colonel Appleby is much the more desirable. Bob Hinckley is not noted for honor among the ladies."

"Which only puts a feather in his cap, my dear Leonora. Our girls think no one so attractive as a Don Juan in society."

"I presume you are right, dear," was the indifferent answer. Then the two ladies passed on and re-entered the ball-room.

"So that explains it," murmured Marion, as she moved slowly from the shadow of a pillar, where she had stood while they were talking.

"Because I happen to have a fairer face than Miss MacGregor, he uses me for a foil! Oh, how I loathe you, Colonel Bob Hinckley, for your deceitful tactics! You have no right whatever to wear the uniform of a soldier!"

As she went back to the gay scene, her cheeks were flaming, and the groups which now thronged the corridor stared at her admiringly as she passed them.

The music was fairly shaking the enormous building now with its rhythmical sway, and the fair girl paused close by the wide entrance to look at the dancers.

The next minute she felt some one touch her arm. It was Emilie MacGregor. The Southern girl's face was as white as death, and her eyes were wildly dilated.

"Quick, come with me!" she whispered.

Marion hurried after her, for the girl had gripped her sleeve. It was evident that she was laboring under great excitement.

The crush was dreadful around the entrance, but before Marion knew it they were in a cloak-room.

"What is it?" she asked, as soon as she could get her breath. The answer astonished her, it was so sharp and vehement.

"There is a quarrel over you and myself," Miss MacGregor said, briefly. "For our own sakes, if not for theirs, we must see that it goes no farther!"

Marion grew calm in an instant, and as the crowd in the cloak-room lessened at that minute she took a decided stand and looked straight at her companion.

"I do not see why I should do anything," she said, slowly. "I know nothing of either of those gentlemen, and their affairs do not concern me. Pray calm yourself, Miss MacGregor! It is not your place to go to them!"

In an instant the girl turned upon her with flashing eyes.

"You do not know the nature of Southern people, if you can say that!" she said, hotly. "Colonel Bob has masqueraded under Colonel Appleby's name, and that to an Appleby is a downright dishonor. They will fight—I am sure of it, for Bob will never apologize. That, too, is a peculiarity of the Southern nature."

"Then let them fight," said Marion, firmly. "It is not for me to interfere. I am not a Southerner, so why should I sympathize with their troubles?

"Oh, but you will sympathize with mine—for I love him!" cried the Southern girl, quickly. There were tears on her lashes now, and her eyes had softened wonderfully.

Marion's heart was touched. She was sorry for the girl. The next moment the two were stealing out through the crowd, but to where or for what Marion could not quite conjecture.

All at once a breath of cool air touched her cheeks. Her companion had led her to an exit on one side of the building, which just at that minute seemed to be entirely deserted.

"Hush! There they are!" whispered Miss MacGregor, as she darted back from the doorway. "They are outside on the steps! Listen a minute. Oh, if we can only hear what they are planning to do! I am sure it will be a fight, if not an out and out duel!"

She put her hand over her heart, and both girls waited. A moment later they heard the real Colonel Appleby say, quietly:

"Either that or public exposure, sir—whichever you choose! I'll teach you that no man can trifle with my name or honor!"

"Very well, then, I accept your terms!" came the answer in Bob Hinckley's voice.

There was a low moan from Miss MacGregor, but Marion whispered a word of warning.

"Hush! Come to the cloak-room at once, and we will talk it over. We can do something, I am sure, to save your lover."

She led her away, the music of the great band thundering in their ears. Even in the midst of all this grand scene one heart, at least, was aching.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SCENE OF THE EVENING.

Ten minutes later the two young ladies appeared in a conspicuous part of the ball-room,

and as they stood side by side the two colonels both saw them.

Colonel Bob Hinckley stared. He could hardly believe his senses. This was an extraordinary way for Miss MacGregor to be showing her jealousy.

The floor was crowded with dancers, and a distinguished-looking Senator was about to lead Miss MacGregor to join them when Marion's escort returned to her side.

It was all she could do to greet him civilly, but for Miss Macgregor's sake she had determined to remain silent.

"You are enjoying it, Miss Marlowe," began the colonel, a little awkwardly. "It is a novel sight, I am sure, the first time you see it."

"It is fascinating, very," was the young girl's low answer, then she gazed eagerly over the floor to see if she could find any of her friends. The flourish of a handkerchief rewarded her at last. Bert and Miss Ellis were just opposite, their faces beaming with enjoyment.

Another group of onlookers passed them and once more Colonel Bob Hinckley was forced to excuse himself to prevent members of the group from calling him by name. It was evident to Marion now that he was decidedly uneasy and that this had been his motive the first time he left her.

"He wishes to keep it up until he has made her thoroughly jealous, I suppose," she whispered to herself. "Well, there is no danger of that now, for she knows how I loathe him. I could not help showing it, even though I knew that she loved him."

There was a stir at the wide entrance now, and the dancing ceased suddenly. The next moment Marion caught a glimpse of the Presidential party. There were fully a dozen faces that she had seen in the White House, and to think that every one of those people had shaken hands with her!

"It is so wonderful! So strange!" she murmured, involuntarily.

"What is strange, my child?" asked a voice at her side.

Marion turned her head quickly and saw the real Colonel Appleby.

She was a little nervous, but she managed to answer, calmly:

"To think that I met them all in the White House, and that they all shook hands with me," she said, as she nodded her head towards the President's party.

"Why, just think of it, Colonel Appleby, I am only a poor actress. Yet those grand ladies, the highest in the land, all smiled so sweetly at me!"

"You were a queen among queens, I'm sure," responded the colonel, gallantly. His voice was so quiet and gentle that the young girl almost stared at him. It did not sound just now as she had heard it, but a short time before. She shivered slightly as she recalled the words he had uttered then, and the terrible thing that he was about to do seemed to paralyze her senses for a minute. "Wealth and position are not all, and our ladies know it," went on the colonel, quietly. "Many of them were only poor girls once. Perhaps, some day, you may be one of them, Miss Marlowe."

Marion's cheeks flushed slightly and her silvery laugh rippled out.

"Oh, how funny that you should suggest such a thing," she said, quickly. "Why, my friend, Miss Allyn, said that this very day! She said that, perhaps, some day, I would live at Washington! She even said I might marry a President."

Her eyes were shining, and she glanced at him roguishly, as she spoke, but the colonel only looked down at her in an earnest manner.

"It is by no means impossible," he said, with a gentle smile. "Still, it is seldom that we have a bachelor President, and, when we do, he is usually spoken for before he enters the White House. You see, by the time a man becomes President, he is usually beyond middle age, and a lady, to be an ideal mistress of the White House, should, at all events, be young. Do you quite approve of youth and age uniting, Miss Marlowe?"

The question was simple enough, but Marion blushed furiously, as she listened, for there was something in the colonel's face that had set her to thinking. He was looking at her with such evident admiration that poor Marion turned her eyes away as she answered his question.

"I have never thought that age made any difference," she began, in a low voice, then a thought flashed through her mind that nearly made her heart stop beating.

How could he sit there so calmly, almost looking love into her eyes and talking easily of marriage when he was on the very verge of fighting a duel?

She was too impulsive by nature to conceal such a thought, and, in a second, she had forgotten the existence of Miss MacGregor completely.

"Oh, sir! I must ask you something!" she said, in a low, but vibrating voice: "That man, Colonel Hinckley, has stolen your name! You are a Southerner, sir. How are you going to punish him?"

She was looking him squarely in the face now with the rest of her secret on her lips. If it was possible, she would wait and see how he answered her.

In an instant a dark frown disfigured the gentleman's brow, but he tried to speak as calmly as ever.

"He not only used my name, Miss Marlowe, but he used it for a dishonorable purpose," he said, slowly. "Such an act as that deserves but one punishment, but you must forgive me for not mentioning it to you at this minute."

Marion could restrain herself no longer, and the music was so loud now that she had to lean nearer to his side in order that he might hear her.

"You are going to fight him," she said, in a sharp whisper, "and, oh, Colonel Appleby, I think that is horrible!"

The colonel drew away, with a look of surprise; but Marion went on. She was determined that he should hear her.

"Yes, it is horrible for gentlemen to fight," she repeated. "There are so many other ways of settling a quarrel. Of course, I am a Northern girl, and perhaps our temper is not as hot as yours, but I am sure that an injury would cut me just as deep: but if I were a man I should never, never resort to fighting!"

The colonel was more composed now, and his eyes twinkled a little as she spoke, but the serious smile upon his lips encouraged Marion.

"For Miss MacGregor's sake and mine, I want you to abandon this—this duel, Colonel Appleby," she went on, more softly. "It is a dreadful thing to happen in civilization; and just think what the result would be if it should get in the newspapers!"

The music had ceased, and the ball was over. As Marion waited for a reply, the eyes of many in the ball-room were turned in her direction.

At last they had learned who the beautiful girl was, and as they stared at the blushing face which was turned so eagerly toward Colonel Appleby they saw Colonel Bob Hinckley approach and speak to her.

He had come as her escort to take her home.

Marion caught her breath with a gasp, and looked from one to the other. Then she raised her head proudly and gave Colonel Bob Hinckley a look of scorn.

A moment later she moved from his presence on Colonel Appleby's arm, while the bogus Congressman stared after her, speechless.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MORNING'S NEWS.

"Well, you found out which of them was which, didn't you, Marion," was Bert's greeting in the morning. "But what the deuce was Hinckley's motive? I give you my word, he's got me guessing!"

"Colonel Hinckley is an army officer, although he is not very well liked. I can't understand how he could stoop to such treachery," said Mr. Temple.

"I think I can guess his reason for flirting with Marion," said Dr. Brookes, soberly. "He was trying to make Miss MacGregor jealous. Did you ever hear of anything so contemptible?"

Marion bit her lips. She could not quite forget the insult, yet that was Bob Hinckley's only motive, she was perfectly certain of it. She had been very careful to tell no tales. For Miss MacGregor's sake, as well as her own, she would say nothing of the anticipated duel, but she was in a state of continual anxiety for fear the papers would print it.

"There's an 'extra!'" cried Bert, as he heard a newsboy calling under the window. "Now, I wonder if that villain has taken another shot at the President. I'm going downstairs to get a paper."

He bounded out of the room, and Marion could feel her face flushing. Could it be possible that the duel had taken place after all? It seemed an eternity before Bert reappeared with the paper.

"Colonel Horace Appleby to see you, miss," said a bellboy, as he paused at the open door and stared straight at Marion.

Marion rose from her chair just as Bert came in, his face fairly crimson with delight, and waving the paper hilariously.

"Whoop! Hurrah! Just listen to this, Marion!" he cried. "They have all the details of the snubbing, with variations, and you are mentioned in the extra as being the 'belle of the ball,' as well as the beautiful girl who saved the President!"

"Is that all?" asked Marion, with an eager look.

"Isn't that enough, dearie? Why, what in the world do you want? Just fancy their getting out an extra to say that!" cried Miss Allyn.

"Oh, there's a lot more stuff with scare heads on it," laughed Bert, as he tossed Miss Allyn the paper. "Two galoots fought a duel over in the Arlington Cemetery at daybreak this morning. I looked for their names, but the paper don't seem to know them."

Marion tried to speak, but her lips would not move. The worst had come, and she could hardly bear to hear it.

"Was any one killed?" asked Miss Ellis, indifferently.

A sharp cry from Miss Allyn made them all look up.

"No, neither was killed, and they don't know their names; but this paper says that Colonel Bob Hinckley is carrying his arm in a sling this morning, and it's my opinion that they suspect him, Marion."

There was no reply, for the young girl had fled. She was on her way to the parlor to see the genuine Colonel Appleby.

It was evident that the colonel had taken more than a passing interest in Marion, although he had called, as he expressed it, "to bid her and her friends good-by," and "to allay any apprehensions she might feel concerning the duel, in view of the fact that the papers had printed some of the details."

When she returned to her room, her friends demanded to know what Colonel Appleby had called to see her about, but she decided to say nothing at present about the duel their two friends had fought.

"What is it, Marion?" asked Miss Allyn, the minute they were alone.

Marion's face grew sober, almost sad, as she replied:

"The colonel tells me that Miss MacGregor has promised to marry Colonel Hinckley," she said, quietly; "so his ruse to make her jealous was perfectly successful."

"Well, she is welcome to him," was Miss Allyn's comment, but Marion sighed softly.

She was sorry for the girl who was to marry such a trickster.

That afternoon the special car bore them away from Washington.

She had only been in that city two days, but they had been filled with excitement, for she had done what no woman had ever done before—reigned queen of the Inauguration Ball and saved the life of the President.

It was weeks before she told even Alma about the duel, but by that time the vague rumors had died out completely, and there was very little danger of their ever being revived, especially as Colonel Bob Hinckley and his wife had departed from the capital.

The man who intended to shoot the President was traced a few days later. He had done as Miss Allyn suggested—slipped quietly from the city. Further than that, no one ever knew of his whereabouts or destiny.

THE END

The company's quick trip back to the West was accomplished on schedule time, and next week's MY QUEEN (No. 25) will tell of her appearance near the shores of the Great Salt Lake. The story will be entitled "Marion Marlowe in Salt Lake City; or, A Bad Deal in Mormon Land."

PATTERN COLUMN.

By special arrangements with the manufacturers we are enabled to supply the readers of MY QUEEN with the patterns of all garments described or illustrated in this column at TEN CENTS each. Address, "Pattern Column," MY QUEEN, 238 William Street, New York City.

☞ *In ordering patterns be sure to give size and number.*

No. 2422—FANCY BLOUSE FOR MISSES.

The model represents tucked pink silk and all-over lace, with further decoration of plain silk. Light-weight velveteen, flannel, cashmere and other soft wool fabrics can be used for the waist.

The pattern is cut in sizes 12 to 16 years. Size 14 requires 3 3-4 yard of 21-inch, 2 3-4 yards of 27-inch, or 1 7-8 yards of 42-inch material. As shown, 2 1-4 yards of 21-inch tucked material, with 1 1-4 yards of all-over and 3-4 yard of velvet or plain silk.

No. 2429—LADY'S SKIRT.

This skirt is in a one-piece style, finished with a graduated flounce, tucked at the top in clusters of three, which throw extra fullness to the foot.

The pattern is cut in sizes 22 to 30 inches waist measure. Size 24 requires 10 yards of 21-inch material or 5 yards of 54-inch material.

FASHION NOTES.

Brown cloth gowns trimmed with heavy black silk braid are considered very smart.

Dainty waists of India mull in pale tints are worn with the tailor-made skirts and coats. They are finely tucked and finished with a lace yoke, belt and cuffs.

Velvetine makes very stylish street gowns trimmed with fur, and in the pale colors dotted with black it is very much used for waists.

The very little amount of velvet it requires to make any of the pretty bolero, Figaro or Eton jackets places them within the means of the most modest purse; and to richly complete a new simply made gown, or to modernize one of other seasons at a little outlay, there is nothing just like them for certain wearers.

Black embroidery on batiste and chiffon is one of the novelties in trimming.

Gray suede slippers worn with gray silk hose are very smart, while for the ball-room there are gilt slippers, and black satin slippers embroidered with gold.

One of the prettiest novelties in purses is of plain gray suede leather simply stitched around the edges and fastened with a buttonhole, and jeweled buttons which vary in elegance and price.

Double-breasted fronts are characterstic of many of the new French walking-jacket models for the coming season. In tweed, cheviot or English serge they are semi-loose; in velvet, kersey, covert cloth or kid cloth they are snug and basque-like.

For trimming ball gowns silver seems to be taking the place of gold, and in combination with lace on pale blue tulle or net it is very attractive. Silver gauze roses are used effectively and lace with silver flounces woven in is another form of decoration.

A stunning little coat of chinchilla is made Eton fashion, but double-breasted with one large rever. The sleeve is a small "bishop," gathered into a velvet band at the wrist, with the fur forming a ruffle over the hand. A chinchilla toque, with black and white ostrich plumes, complete the effect.

Very elegant kid cloth gowns are made by all representative Parisian tailors and dressmakers. This fabric is the finest Saxony wool in the most beautiful quality of cloth that has ever been produced on any loom in France. The surface of the fabric is as soft, flexible and velvety as that of an undressed kid glove—hence its name.

A handsome princess gown is made of sage gray French broadcloth over a foundation silk skirt. The guimpe, undersleeves and muff are of Breitschwanz, with a border of the same at the foot of the skirt. The Kaiser collar is extremely high, but it terminates considerably short of the front of the neck, and is finished with a stock-shaped inside collar-band of a glowing shade of wine-colored velvet.

It is very likely that the diminutive fancy jackets in Eton, bolero, Mikado, French guard and similar styles will be in marked favor for the spring and summer seasons. Very smart and stylish French costumes just brought to our shores from some of the most noted designing houses of Paris show these very jackets, accompanying gowns that are all of cloth, drap d'ete, Zibeline, camel's hair and similar handsome stuffs.

Some of the ultra-fashionable young debutantes and matrons are wearing with their tailor-made skirts of cloth or velvet, imported shirt-waists of sheer but closely woven India mull, in white, pink, mandarin, yellow, etc., with deep yokes, girdles, and sleeve trimmings of whit Chantilly lace. A very smart arrangement of wide black velvet ribbon finishes the waist on the front, about five yards being used for the choux loops and ends.

The shirt waist, from all indications, will be fully as popular for spring and summer wear as it was last year. Already it is prominently in evidence in both importing and fancy dry goods houses. Models in every new and pretty form are set forth by fashion designers. Spring "opening" announcements contain special notices of the shirt-waist exhibit, and dressmakers known and unknown to fame are deluged with questions, suggestions and advance orders.

Ornaments and trimmings on the top of the skirt at both sides are very stylish. Either velvets or ribbons placed lengthwise and running five or six inches from the waist down the side of the skirt, carry out the idea very prettily.

There is always a question as to how to finish a chemisette for a jacket suit. Exceedingly high or elaborate neck effects are not well regarded now, and, of course, a plain choker with no ornamentation is equally out of the question. A pretty idea is a chemisette of tucked white satin with a high, turnover collar what is called the Directoire collar—of the same stuff. The collar may be effectively edged with a small line of black velvet.

No. 2439—GIRL'S BLOUSE SUIT.

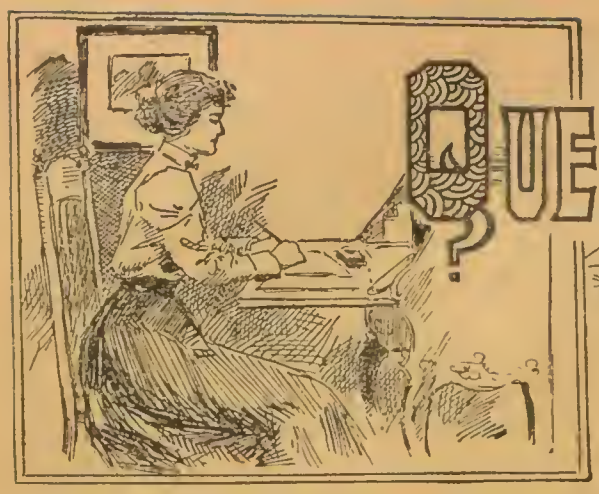
A comfortable blouse suit for girls is made up, for winter wear, in wool fabrics. Pretty plaids in poplins and cashmere afford an opportunity for dainty combinations. The model presents the blouse in red plaid, and the skirt in plain red. The model is appropriate for cotton wash fabrics, as well as woolens.

The pattern is cut in sizes 4 to 12 years. Size 8 requires five and one-quarter yards of 27-inch, four and one-quarter yards of 32-inch, or three yards of 42-inch material. As shown, one and one-quarter yard of 42-inch, with seven-eighth yard of contrasting material, and five yards of braid for the blouse, and one and one-half yard of 42-inch for the skirt.

No. 2457—GIRL'S EMPIRE COAT.

Empire models are very popular this winter for both indoor and outdoor garments. This model is shown in red cloth, with stitched trimming bands decorating the lower edge of the short waist. The one-seam sleeve is gathered without much fullness to the wristband. Cheviot cloth, covert, melton and other cloaking material would be suitable for this style of coat.

The pattern is cut in sizes 6 to 12 years. Size 10 requires three yards of 42-inch, or two and one-half yards of 54-inch material.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

BY GRACE SHIRLEY

NOTE.—This department is a special feature of this publication, and it will be appreciated, we feel sure, by all our readers. It is conducted by Miss Shirley, whose remarkable ability to answer all questions, no matter how delicate the import, is well known. Readers of "MY QUEEN" need not hesitate to write her on any subject. Miss Shirley will have their interests at heart and will never refuse her assistance or sympathy. As all letters are answered only through the columns of "MY QUEEN," it is unnecessary to enclose stamps.

So many letters are being received by Miss Shirley requiring answers in this department that we shall have to ask our correspondents to limit their letters to 200 words, in order that all may be answered. STREET & SMITH.

"I have a step-father who abuses me shamefully, not by beating me, but by cruel words. I also have a lover who knows how I am treated, and tells me it will not be for long. He has plenty to keep a home on, and intends to marry me sooner or later, but I think he is almost afraid because I am so young. I am fifteen and he is twenty-five years old. But I feel that I cannot stand my father's treatment much longer, although he dresses me in the latest and best of style. I also have a grand home, but am very unhappy. Please advise me. MARTHA H."

You are very young to marry and your lover is wise to delay for a time. Try to make the best of your trouble at home and wait for a while before you enter into married life. If your lover really understands how unhappy you are, and promises you relief soon, we think you can safely trust to him and his judgment.

"I have read all of your books 'My Queen,' and am very much interested in them, but am disappointed in Marion Marlowe, as I think she is inclined to be a flirt. If it was in real life she would certainly be called fickle, for she has been acquainted with all of the gentlemen long enough to have a choice by this time. VERONA."

We cannot understand why you should think Marion is a flirt. She has been absolutely honest with all her lovers, and has told them frankly that she has no intention of marrying as yet. Why should she "make a choice" when she has not sought the attentions of any one of the men who admire her, nor encouraged them in their desire for a claim upon her affections? Marion is a straightforward girl who esteems her friends highly, values their friendship and returns it with sincerity, but she has never shown the least disposition to "flirt" with a man or to simulate a feeling which she did not possess.

"I would kindly ask you if you will please be so kind as to try to obtain the consent of the party who signed herself 'Hope L.' in your January number, seemingly a young lady, to send me her name and address or have her send it herself, if she will, as I would like to correspond with her. EMIL A. S."

We are unable to do as you request. The correspondence department of "My Queen" is not intended as a medium through which to make acquaintances.

"I have made a bet with the captain of the military society of a three dollar hat and a three dollar pair of shoes. I claim that an advertisement that appeared in a French paper last week is not correct as the lady should be named before the gentleman. The captain says the gentleman should be named before the lady. The following is the advertisement, only it is translated into American.

"'Mr. Charles D—— was last night engaged to Miss M——. The wedding will take place on Sunday evening, January 6, at the bride's home.'

"Which of us wins the bet? CHARLES A."

In marriage notices the name of the groom precedes that of the bride and the same rule holds good in regard to engagement notices, although the latter are in very poor taste, however worded. The captain wins the bet.

"I am a girl of sixteen and am called very pretty. I have never had a lover, and do not care anything for the boys. Some of my girl friends call me an old maid. Do you think I will ever go with the boys and care anything for them or they for me? I don't like to be called an old maid. ELIZABETH R."

Don't pay any attention to what your girl friends may call you. It is just as well that you do not care for the boys now, as you are too young to be spending your time in that way. When you are a few years older, we have no doubt that you will find pleasure in men's society and they in yours, but there is plenty of time for that.

"A girl of twenty married a man who she thought passionately and devotedly loved her, but she did not quite want to marry him. After marriage she tried to fulfill her duty in every way, and then found that she loved him, but that it was unappreciated. She discovered that if she gives him her money for business he will love her, and otherwise he will not. Do you think she

ought to give it to him? Would an honest, true man act like this? They have quarreled frequently about the matter. MRS. O."

We fail to see where a husband has any claim upon his wife's money, or why he should withold his affection from her because she does not make him a present of her fortune. It would appear that he was in love with her money and not with her.

"I am a young Jewish boy, nineteen years old. I am deeply in love with a Gentile girl who, I know, possesses a character like Marion Marlowe's. Now, I intend to make this girl my wife, and she wishes me to become her husband. The point is that my folks are very much against my marrying this girl, as the Jewish laws forbid Jews to enter into wedlock with Gentiles. I really don't know what to do. A. H."

We do not understand why a difference in religion should interfere with love affairs, any more than a difference in politics. It is the girl that you want to marry and not her faith.

"I am a young lady, eighteen, have a nice home, admiring brothers and one sister, who keeps company with a young man whom I despise. I am the youngest in the family. I have, I know, been spoiled and now at this age I have a strong desire to become an actress. Would you advise me to take such a step? Of course, it is understood that once I go on the stage I will be disowned by my family. LAURETTA D."

We earnestly advise you to remain at home and to try and find some occupation there. You would find it harder than you think to make a living on the stage unless you are an exceptionally gifted young woman. We do not see why you should concern yourself about your sister's friends. You would not like her to express herself so freely in regard to yours, would you? Try to be an earnest, ambitious woman and seek some regular occupation that will be a benefit to others, and we think your family will soon cease to "spoil" you.

"I am only sixteen years of age and this is my only trouble, that I can't help myself. I have loved the stage and fame ever since I was ten years old, but my mother despises it and so does my father. I don't know what to do, I am just crazy for it. Whenever anybody mentions fame or the stage, I go mad. Please advise me what to do. "ROSETTA K."

You are entirely too young to be thinking of going on the stage. It would be much better if you spent your time in studying and fitting yourself to be a good, well-educated, sensible woman. We had to correct your letter in several places, before it was fit for the printer's hands, and we judge that you could spend your time in school to more advantage than anywhere else.

"I am motherless and fatherless, a lonely orphan. I am beset with lovers, although I am very poor, and I can't understand why they are all in love with me. I am very fond of them all, but the one whom I like the best has a very disagreeable habit of removing his false teeth. I don't mind when we are alone, but it embarrasses me very much before people. P. O."

Your lover's habit is certainly a unique one. The best way to remedy any such matter is not to endeavor to be too "delicate" about it or you may be misunderstood. Tell him plainly and frankly that you object to it, and how disgusting it is. Let him understand exactly how you feel and he will, no doubt, cease to annoy you in this way.

"I am a young lady, sixteen years of age. My folks are very religious. I am a popular young lady and many young gentlemen want to go with me when I go anywhere, and when I go with one the others are mad, and will follow me. Will you please be so kind as to tell me what to do "HELEN M. M."

We imagine that the "young men" who follow you when you go with one of them must be very young, indeed, even younger than you are, Helen. We would advise you not to go about with boys or young men for several years yet. By that time, probably, both you and your acquaintances will have grown more sensible and you will not be subjected to such annoyances.

"I am desperately in love with a nice young man. He comes to the house quite often, but whether he comes to see myself or my older sister I do not know. He always asks if the "young ladies" are in, and when he sees one he invariably asks for the other. He has been doing this for nearly nine months. Please tell me what to do, for I love him so. JULIA I. G."

The young man, apparently, has no special feeling for either of you. It is most unfortunate that you should have fallen in love with him under the circumstances. Try your best to overcome this feeling and to entertain only friendship for him. A woman makes a sad mistake when she gives her affection where it is not reciprocated.

"I wrote you a note about two months ago regarding a love matter of mine, which was intended for the correspondence column of 'My Queen.' As yet it has not appeared in print, and I have just completed No. 11. I have read 'My Queen' from the first issue to date, and have also a complete file of 'Comrades.' I enjoy 'My Queen' better than 'Comrades,' as the former has more love in it than the latter. Yet the 'Comrades' are very enjoyable, indeed, considering that they deal with a different line of stories. I intend to get and read the 'Shield' every week. I signed myself B. E. C., and should you not be able to find my previous letter, publish this one and I will write you another. B. EDGAR C."

We are glad to learn that you enjoy reading our publications so much and have no doubt that subsequent issues will interest you even more. Your letter, together with our answer, appeared in No. 17 of "My Queen." Readers who grow impatient over the seeming delay in the appear-

ance of their letters should remember that the edition of "My Queen" is so large that it takes some time to print it in spite of the size of our plant, and the matter for publication is necessarily made up some time in advance of the date of publication. Every letter receives the personal attention of Miss Shirley and is printed in its regular course.

"I am a young girl sixteen years old, and I wish to thank Miss Shirley for writing such a nice weekly journal as 'My Queen.' Marion Marlowe is the model of a pure, sweet girl that every young girl should pattern after. I appreciate 'My Queen' very highly, and I think it is a good journal for every young girl to read. I have read every number of 'My Queen' to the latest, and shall continue reading them. I think the correspondence department very interesting, and I have obtained very good advice through it. I wish much success, and a long, happy life to Miss Shirley and Marion Marlowe. Hoping to see my letter in print. CONSTANCE."

Many thanks for your kind words. They are deeply appreciated.

"I have a sweetheart and have been going with him about a year. He is leader of one of the orchestras, and when his orchestra plays for a dance he always asks me to go. Is it proper for me to go when he plays? There is a girl who comes to visit here, and when she sees him at a dance she always follows him around. What would you do if you were in my place? Our parents think we are too young to go together. He is twenty and I am eighteen. CRETE L."

We do not advise your going out with this young man against your parents' advice. They are probably the best judges of what is for your good, and you are certainly both of you young enough to wait a while before going together continually. We advise you to have your sweetheart call upon you at your home instead and only go out with him when your parents consent.

"I have read every number of 'My Queen,' and have enjoyed them very much. I would like to know will there be any more books issued after 'My Queen' No. 12? MARY D."

We are glad you have enjoyed "My Queen" so much. As you see, we had no idea of discontinuing the publication after No. 12. In fact, Marion's adventures since that issue have been more interesting than those you have already read, and we can promise you that they will continue to grow in interest.

"I had a gentleman calling on me for quite a while. I have nothing to complain of, but I feel I have utterly failed to interest him. He was nice to me, but never seemed to prefer my society to that of any one else. Now he has ceased coming, and as I think a good bit of him can you suggest a way for me to win him back, for without him there is no happiness or pleasure for me. "BEATRICE R. W."

We are very sorry for you, Beatrice, for you seem to have given your affection where it was unsought and unappreciated. We do not advise you to try to "win him back." You have no reason to think that you would succeed in arousing his interest now any more than before. Engage in some occupation that will take your time and thought and mix more with other people. In this way you will gradually overcome your unhappy frame of mind.

"I have kept company with a young lady for over a year. She has recently moved to another town, where I pay her my visits; I love her dearly and she loves me as much if not more, for she never cares to go with any other young men. She is nineteen and I am twenty, and the first boy she has kept company with. Now, do you think I am treating her wrong to attend a ball, theatre or party with young ladies of the same society? I never attend these amusements with other young ladies only when it is impossible for her to accompany me. JAY I. C."

We see no reason why you should deprive yourself of society because your sweetheart lives in another town. Innocent pleasure hurts no one, and we do not think that your sweetheart will care any less for you because you do not stay home and mope.

"I am a young girl of seventeen, and as I am considered quite pretty, I have quite a number of gentlemen friends. I have one constant caller to whom my parents object, because he is a Democrat, and my father is a Republican. Do you think this sufficient reason for me to discontinue his friendship? GRACE D."

We fail to see why your friend's politics should be considered an objection. He has quite as much right to his opinions as your father has to his. If your friend is a gentleman, chivalrous and high-minded in his attitude towards you, we think you can accept his escort without considering his politics.

"I have a gentleman friend who gives me a call occasionally and who is quite a debater. I believe he is of Irish descent and born in England. Our last subject was, Who speaks the simplest, purest and most correct language of these three English-speaking peoples the Irish, the English and the so-called Americans? He says the Irish people always did speak and are now speaking the simplest and purest language. Second, the English. The Americans, he says, speak not English. They speak what we call broken English. MARIE A. B."

A perfectly "pure" language is hardly to be found to-day, and a person who uses the "purest" language known is even more rare than the language itself.

Both English and Irish are corruptions of their predecessors, Saxon, Norman and Gaelic, and our so-called "American" can best be described as a blend or amalgamation of every tongue that was heard at the tower of Babel. We should place the best English before the best of the other two mentioned, as being the "most correct," although it is no purer nor is it so simple as the Irish language.

"I am a boy of seventeen and am off attending school. Have met a young lady, and am desperately in love with her, and asked her to be my wife. She readily accepted, but her parents object. I think my parents can easily provide for her. Now, I want to ask your advice whether or not I should elope with her. MANUEL MeG."

By no means take any such foolish step as to elope. You are too young to think of marriage, and it is evident that you do not realize its responsibilities when you suggest that your parents can support your wife. No right-minded man would consider marriage for a moment under such circumstances. Wait until you have a good position and can support your own wife before you ask any woman to marry you. That is the only manly course to pursue.

"There is a young man that comes to see me very often, and makes love to me. I want to know if he is in earnest or not. He has dark brown curly hair and brown eyes, dark complexion, age twenty-three years. He is rather timid, and I influence him in any way I wish. I am a girl that will always have my own way. I am sixteen years old and my hair and eyes are the same color as his. I treat him as a friend, and that is all, and when he asks me if I love him, I tell him 'yes,' but I don't. S. C. N. S."

The fact that the young man "makes love" to you would indicate that he is in earnest, unless you have some special reason for doubting his sincerity. You should not tell any man that you love him when you do not. Love is too serious a matter to be treated lightly, and no true woman will mislead a man in this manner. You are rather young to be spending much time thinking about love affairs. Since you do not care for the young man, the only thing for you to do is to tell him so frankly.

"I read your kind answers to young girls, so I ask you to answer this one for me. I am dead in love with a young man and he treats me very kindly, but never makes a sign of an engagement. How could I let him know I love him?
"KATE R."

If the young man has only treated you kindly, as any friend would, we cannot advise you to let him know that you love him. In fact, we recommend that you endeavor to overcome these feelings and to save your affection for the man who seeks it and appreciates it.

"I am a young woman, twenty-one years old. I met a gentleman, twenty-four years old, just a year ago, and love him very much. At the end of six months he took a position out West, where he has since resided. The first few months he wrote every week, but lately his letters are growing very short Would you advise me to ask him the reason or cease writing to him? Have I mistaken his friendship for love? One other question: Is there any harm in letting a young man kiss me if he walks home with me in the evening and is not engaged to me? B. L. M."

We would judge that the young man was losing his interest in you; his actions certainly indicate it. There is no special reason why you should discontinue the correspondence unless you wish to do so. It would seem that you mistook his friendly attentions for those of a more tender nature than he intended, which is very unfortunate.

We do not see any harm in an occasional friendly kiss if it is understood that it is a favor granted an old friend. Young women should not be too generous with such privileges, but should reserve these favors for those who deserve them.

"I am a married woman, and my husband and myself attended a ball. We had the first dance together and just as we stopped dancing an old acquaintance of my husband's asked me for the next two-step in his presence. I answered 'yes,' and my husband became very angry and left me at once, saying he had never been cut off so short before. The gentleman had already asked my husband's permission to dance with me without my knowledge, and he told him 'certainly.' Do you think I should have asked his permission in the young man's presence?
"MRS. CHRYSTAL H."

Married couples attend balls on exactly the same footing as any other couple, that is, with the expectation of dancing with others. It is customary for a lady to engage herself for any one dance to the first applicant requesting the privilege of dancing that number with her. It is not customary for her to ask her escort's permission. Your escort, whether he be your friend, fiance or husband, is entitled to the first dance, and to take you in to supper. He applies for the privilege of dancing any other than the first, upon exactly the same footing as any other gentleman present.

"I proposed by letter to a young lady—'the finest little girl in this world'—but received no answer. I waited, have waited four months—no answer as yet. I wrote again, but a different kind of a letter, asking her if she would go to the theatre with me, not mentioning the other letter. No answer. I had every reason to believe the young lady cared for me. I have probably done wrong—for the last three months I have only visited her house once, the reception this time was very unsatisfactory to me. Some other gentleman called and she left the room, not even excusing herself. I could not help noticing it. But I hear from a friend—he visits her sister—that she always inquires how I am. I am twenty-one years old.

"I think the best thing for me to do is to forget that I honored her with my love, for I supposed I loved her at the time, and call once a month or so just friendly.
"A GENTLEMAN READER OF 'MY QUEEN.'"

Since the young lady has not answered either of your letters, we would consider that she did not desire to continue your acquaintance, and we doubt whether she would be pleased to have you call upon her. Your letter indicates that you are getting over your love for her and the wisest course to pursue would probably be to let the affair terminate right where it is.

"I am engaged to a noble young man who loves me dearly. I know that no one could be better to me and yet I am afraid I do not love him. I am twenty-three years old, but if I have ever been in love I do not know it. Sometimes I think I could learn to love him, and then it seems that it would not be honorable nor just to him to marry him without loving him with my whole heart, and yet I don't know my own heart. Do women ever learn to love their husbands after marriage? PAULINE G."

You are perfectly right to hesitate to marry without love. The trials and responsibilities of married life are many, and the only thing that can possibly carry one through them successfully is true affection. We believe that some women have learned to love their husbands after marriage, but it is a dangerous experiment. Suppose you learned to love some one else, instead! The only safe rule is not to marry without love, any other course is an injustice to your husband and is apt to be an injury to you both.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup

Has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING with PERFECT SUCCESS. It SOOTHES the CHILD, SOFTENS the GUMS, ALLAYS all PAIN; CURES WIND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHŒA. Sold by Druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup," and take no other kind. Twenty-five cents a bottle.

THE PEOPLE'S
COMMON SENSE
MEDICAL ADVISOR
IN PLAIN ENGLISH;
OR,
Medicine Simplified.

By RAY VAUGHN PIERCE, M.D.,

Chief Consulting Physician to the Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute, and President of the World's Dispensary Medical Association.

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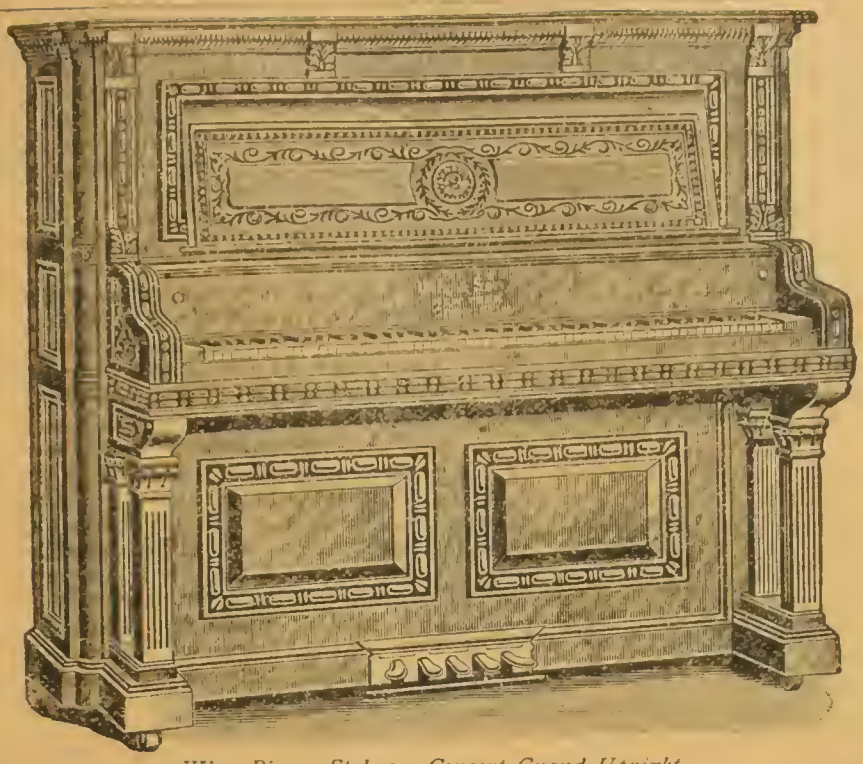

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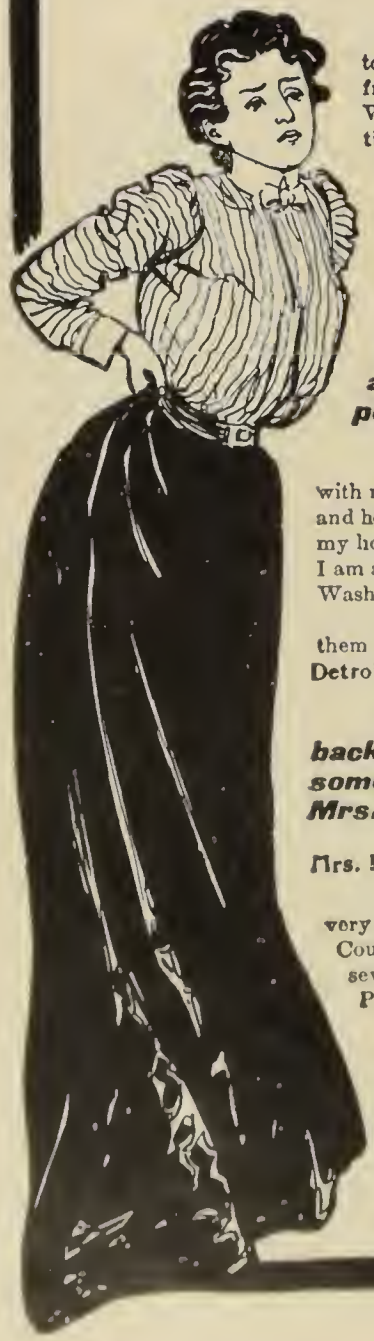

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